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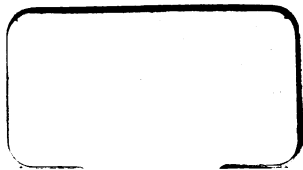
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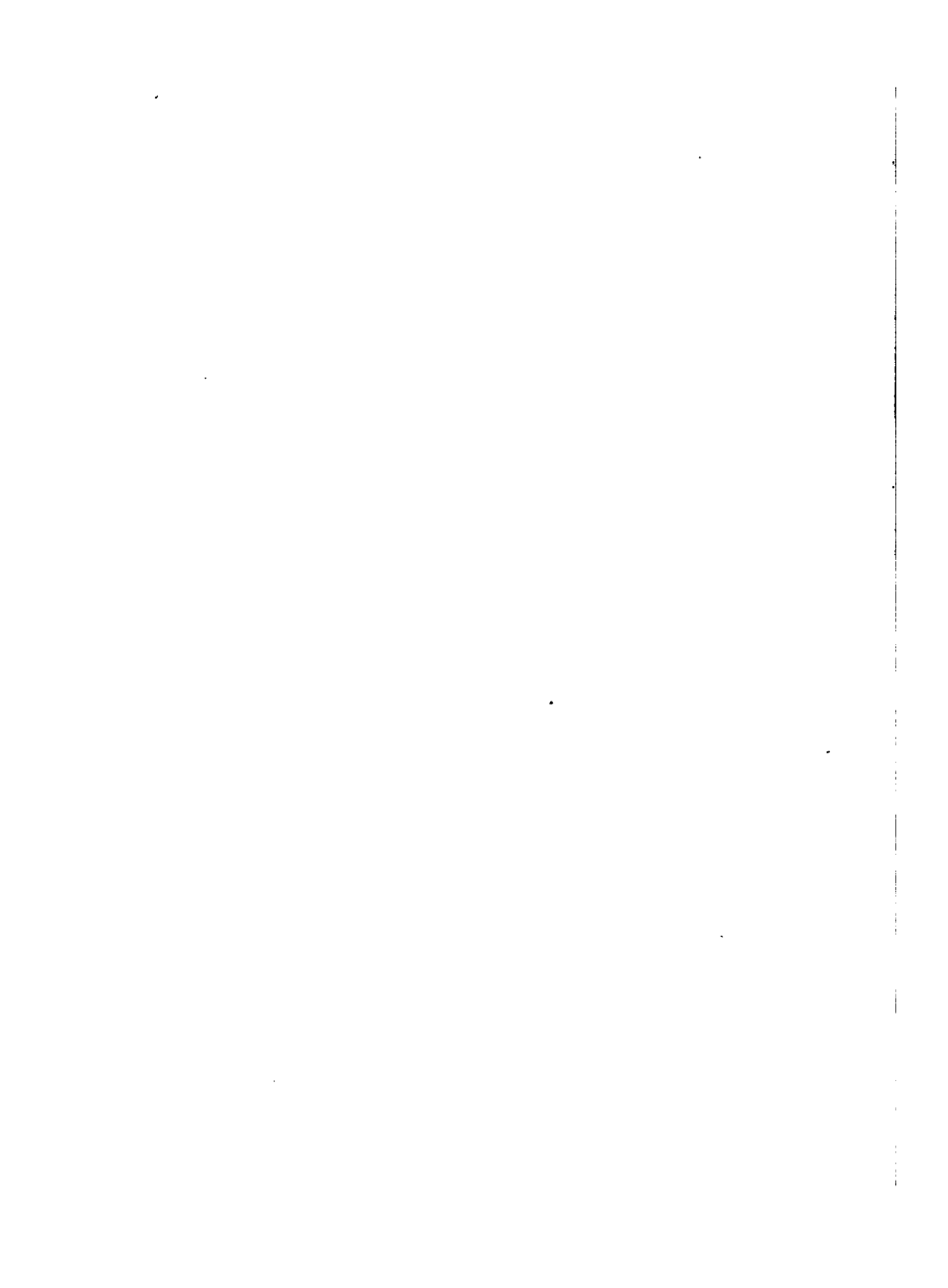
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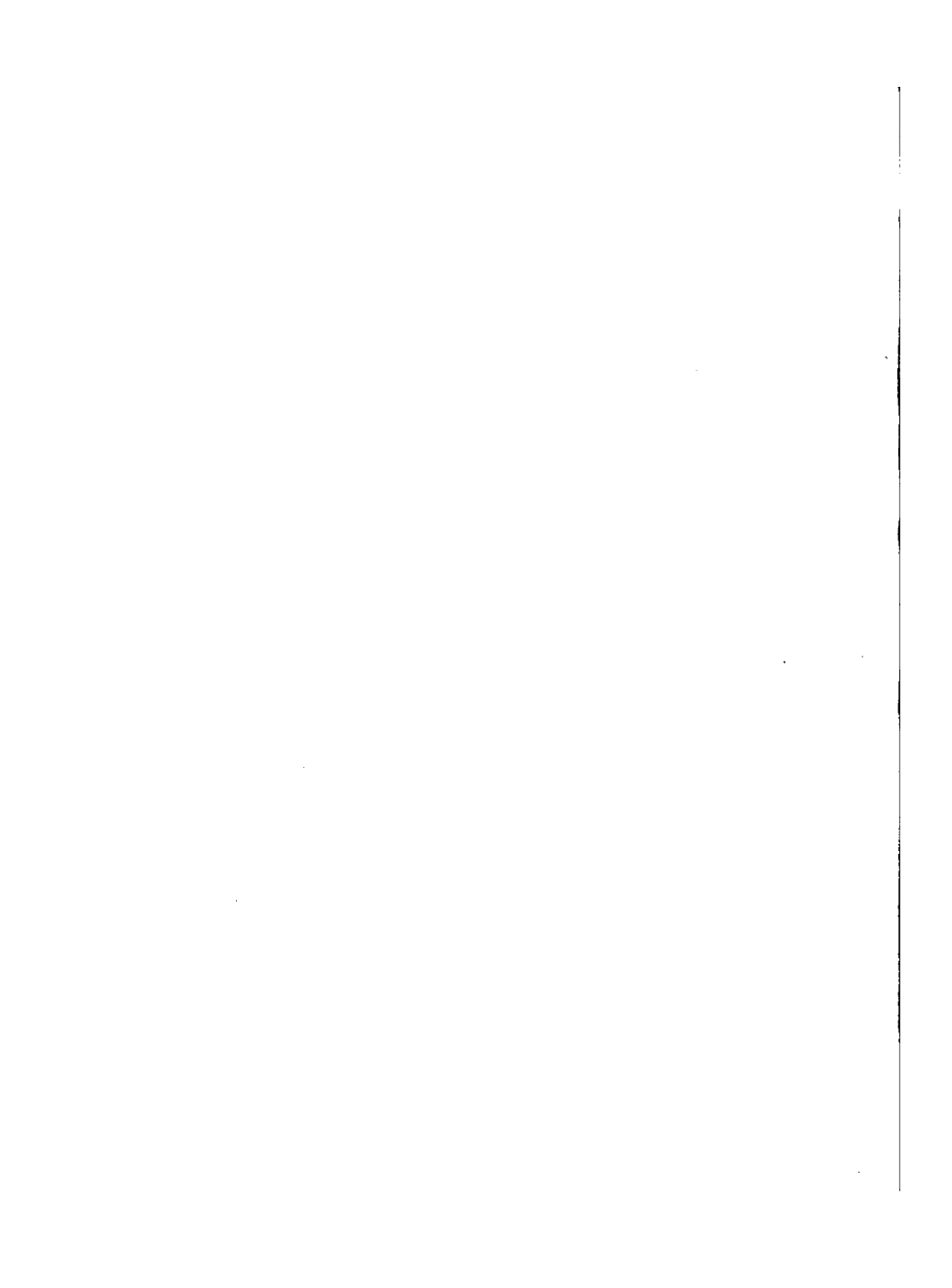
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LIVING LARGELY





Chas. Gordon Ames

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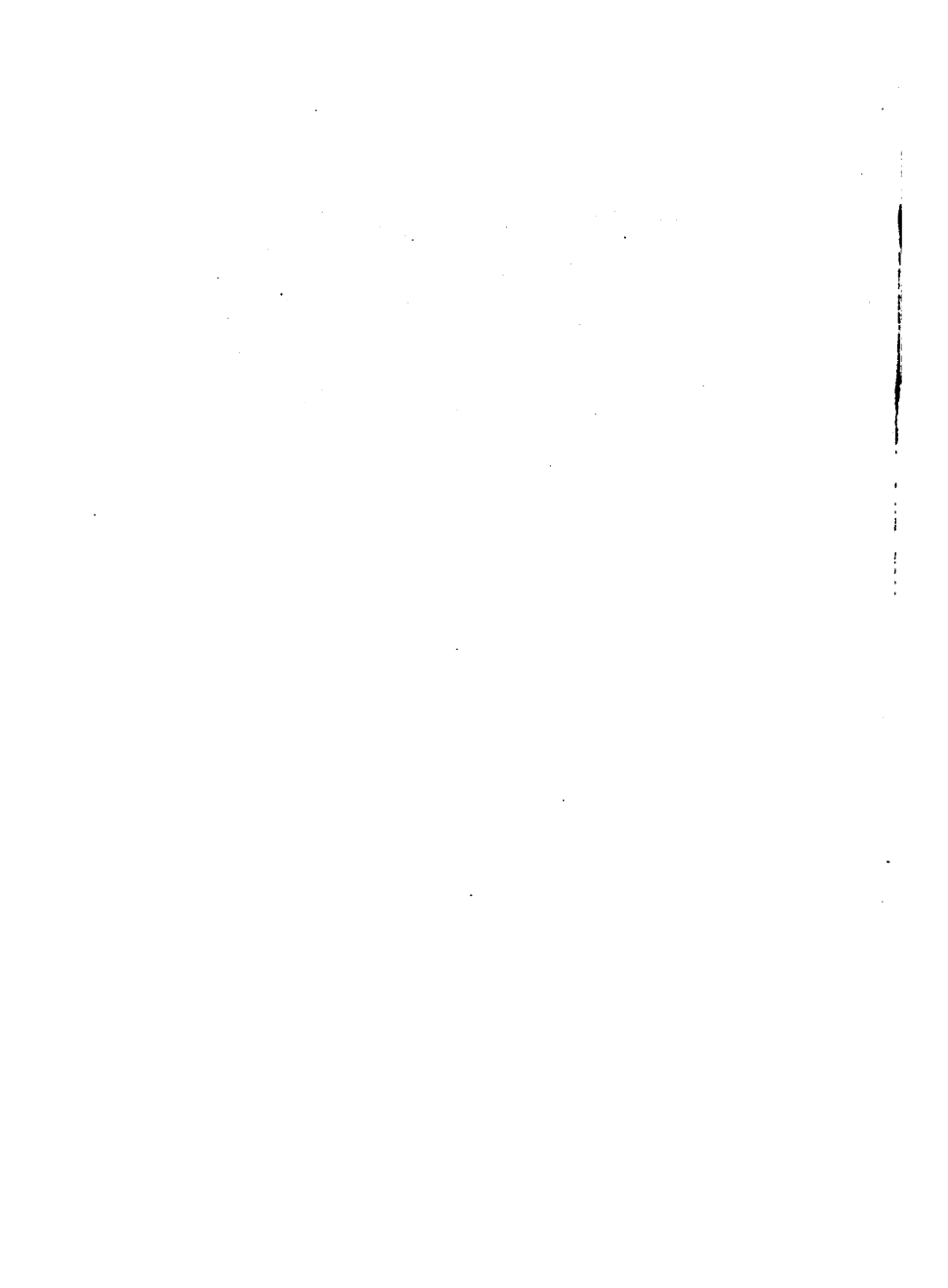
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Chas. Gordon Ames



LIVING LARGELY

Extracts from the
Writings of

CHARLES GORDON AMES

MINISTER OF THE CHURCH OF THE DISCIPLES, BOSTON

Selected and Arranged by

E. M. S.



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LIVING LARGELY



January

JANUARY 1

THE NEW YEAR

KNEELING in spirit on the threshold of the new year, let us unite in this prayer: That we may leave the dead past to bury its dead, and take our place at once in the beautiful order appointed for us; that our own movement through the days may be a kind of upward procession; that our growth may be steady and uninterrupted, that life itself may become more deep and divine, more rich and fruitful; that we may cheerfully pay the price of excellence; that we may have

an ever-clearer understanding of the true object of existence and the right use of our powers and opportunities, that we may take in and give out ever larger measures of good; that all we have learned or may learn of God, or Christ, or the world, or ourselves, may nourish in us a more abundant and more worthy life. O Lord, our Lord, so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

JANUARY 2

LIFE

It will be well for us to begin with an act of faith; to begin with accepting the world as we find it, by accepting our place and part in it, and even by accepting ourselves along with the rest, and all the possessions of our own nature. It does not follow that we must call this the best possible world that God could make, any more than we should think ourselves the best possible creatures. But it does follow that, since this world is our present home and school, our part is to make the best possible use of it.

JANUARY 3

What can we do with "health and a day"? We can live, consciously or unconsciously, in infinite space and infinite time; we can take in something of the universal life and the Godlike forces; we can come in touch with Nature, humanity, and the Supreme Spirit. Between every rising and setting sun, we can gain visions of truth and beauty; we can exercise affections of goodness and purity; we can put our powers of mind and body under the discipline of virtue and usefulness; we can live and learn and love; we can do and enjoy and grow. Thus, in the very act of finding the world around us, we find ourselves and acquire the use of our faculties. We store up the results of observation and reflection; we become acquainted with reality; we keep step with the larger order. We can convert the days and years into building-material for the temple of a noble personality. How precious, then, is time; how sacred, then, is life!

JANUARY 4

What is time? It is our present share in eternity.

JANUARY 5

Our business here is not to get a living, but to live.

JANUARY 6

Is life worth living? That depends on the quality of the life; it depends on the suitability of life to our nature.

JANUARY 7

What is life? No definition seems to make it plain; but perhaps we have a right to say that life is our share of God. While we touch the transient, and leave it, we live in the Eternal, and never leave it. Our lives are set fast in the larger life, like the limbs and leaves of a tree. In the very act of contemplating ourselves, we look into the infinite; just as in contemplating a star, we look into the boundlessness of space. Without space, no stars; without God, no life.

JANUARY 8

When we have some glimpses of deeper meaning in our existence, when some gracious possibility of good opens before us like a door, or when we feel in some rare, sweet moments that life is not merely a burden of care and a pressure of tasks, but a beautiful privilege, may we not take these gentle stirrings as signs of the divine dealing — the Father's drawing of His children? Let us not put it far away by calling it supernatural; it is all a part of Nature, if we use the word largely enough. It is simply life, on the way to become more life. The generous Giver does not give by fits and starts, nor come to us on occasional visits; these common experiences are signs of His presence. It is we who are fitful and inconstant, in our faith and our obedience.

JANUARY 9

From life we come, through life we are passing, to life we go. Such are our yesterdays, our to-days, our to-morrows. We may, therefore, take all life as a divine manifestation, a perpetual revelation.

JANUARY 10

Every hour is lost in which we are not confirmed in the possession and enjoyment of that which is best in us. Whether we work, or play, or pray, all is profanation and sacrilege, unless it yields sweetness, sanity, and serenity.

JANUARY 11

We cannot forget the past without being blind to the present and disqualified for the future.

JANUARY 12

Our debt to the past is certainly very great; but we also are real; the creative forces are unspent and continuous, and each man, though he is an effect of many causes, is himself the cause of new effects. Along with his other inheritances is the power to re-shape his surroundings, to reform his life, and to take the direction of his own conduct. So the Past does not merely lie heavily upon us as a weight; it also works mightily in us as a forward impulse; it encourages us to use the Present in securing new

advantages for the Future. They say we are the products of evolution. Very good: the Power behind evolution works progressively; it has been busy through the ages building up higher forms of life.

JANUARY 13

Order is earth's first law, as well as heaven's; man's as well as God's. Man, if he is to be of God's kind, must also be a creator—a power behind evolution; he must produce his own kosmos. Therefore, he must see and feel the difference between what *is* and what *ought to be*. He must bring his wits and his powers to bear upon the chaos within and around him. Acting under divine guidance and with divine help, he must create his own world. Passively, he must, indeed, let the great wise forces of the Spirit have their own way with him, that they may work out his continuous regeneration and transformation. But actively, he must take part in this business. He must resist and overcome his own inertia and all the forces and tendencies that hold him down or make for disorder and confusion.

JANUARY 14

The things that are seen and temporal have their claim upon us; and the best use of the things unseen and eternal is to let them infold us and press upon us like an atmosphere, — softly, invisibly, and equably on all sides, consolidating and steadying, giving itself to us, one breath at a time. One breath at a time! This is all we need; yet it is our way of getting more. Eternity is ours, if we improve the moments as they pass. The universe is ours, if we take and use what is within our reach. The whole Book of Wisdom is ours as a text-book, but we must master the alphabet and pick out the meaning of simple sentences. We need not strain to swallow the ocean; every drop is a specimen of the whole.



JANUARY 15

When a man abandons himself to the performance of his duty, whether the duty be to labor or to rest, he is in the path of progress toward perfection. He is taken along by the strong stream of life toward his better destiny. By

simply minding his own business he puts philosophy, poetry, and religion into each passing hour.

JANUARY 16

We are not here in the universe merely as curious spectators and students; we are here to share and enjoy its life. We are living under the dispensation of the Spirit. We know something of its power and glory, and we know it not for ourselves alone. A very sacred trust is ours. We hold in our minds and hearts those truths and powers which may regenerate the world, if we believe in God and man. And we believe they are never far apart. Not God away up there in the glory, alone; not man down here in the dust, alone; but God and man here and together, one and inseparable, now and forever.

JANUARY 17

Were the Shakespeares and Newtons present and waiting in the primal germs of humanity? or does the creative power infuse new energies

into races and souls? No man has lifted that veil; but whether the original Life-Giver works horizontally to evolve what was first involved, or perpendicularly to pour down new measures of inspiration, the gracious fact is that we can grow as individuals, and can advance as communities and races.

JANUARY 18

There are two steps that can take us forward in the path to perfection, and these two steps must be forever repeated. To hear and to do; to learn and to obey; to study and to practise: these are the steps of personal progress. Life itself is these two things: a science, or something to be learned, and an act, or something to be done. And always there is something more to be learned, something more to be done. Seen in a religious light, all that is worth learning is truth, reality, or the knowledge of God, of His world, and His laws. All that is worth doing is the will of God, which is another name for whatever is reasonable, right, and fit.

JANUARY 19

Here is the union of reason and faith. There is room in our life for the full, free play of both human and divine forces. A man has use for all his wits; he must profit by experience; he must learn by suffering the law of cause and effect; he must avail himself of all proven means for physical health and completeness; and, to the extent of his knowledge and ability, he must take care of himself exactly as if there were no God. But his own knowledge and ability will not carry him far; in the very use of these he is as dependent as if he had them not; and so he must trust and rest, as if God were all in all.



JANUARY 20

Our real life — the life that gives us our true rank and grand opportunity in the universe — must, therefore, require for its nourishment and support a vast supply of spiritual realities, suited to its nature. It cannot be that we have no other errand here on the earth than merely to get out of it a bodily living for a few years, and then sink back into its bosom. We must have some-

thing more than bread, because we are something more than beasts.

JANUARY 21

We must find our means of grace and our helps to glory right where we are, or nowhere. We must be true to our own nature. We must accept and consecrate our appointed relations to the earth and its inhabitants; we must fill our proper place among men; we must occupy the days and hours, as they come and go, with whatever of work or study or play or rest is most suitable to the passing needs of ourselves and our companions. And all the time our spirits must lie open to the influence of whatever things are true and beautiful and good.

JANUARY 22

Man is like a tree; let his roots be well set in the earth, and he can lift his head toward heaven. If this world must not make us blind to the higher, neither must the higher make us blind to the large meanings and uses of this.

JANUARY 23

The problems of life are to be solved by living, and its largest problems can only be solved by living largely.

JANUARY 24

The summits are to be gained, not by leaping the bold mountain walls, nor by dashing against the sharp forbidding crags, but by climbing the long slope, step by step.

JANUARY 25

A large part of all that is best in our human world is wrought out by imperfect instruments. The wisdom is not in the tools, but in the power that uses them.

JANUARY 26

Little matter if our progress is slow; a great matter if we are moving in the right direction.

JANUARY 27

Our higher interests suffer from the poorness of our thoughts, and from the narrowness of our sympathies.

JANUARY 28

The only way to become better than we are is by yielding to the attraction of something better than we are. By thinking downward, loving downward, living downward, we sink; by thinking upward, loving upward, living upward, we rise.

JANUARY 29

A perfect life would be restful, even in the midst of intense activities, and so it would neither rust out, wear out, nor tear out.

JANUARY 30

Have we found what we were seeking,—a trustworthy interpretation of our life and of the world? Yes, we have found, not indeed a solu-

tion of all problems, but a reasonable way of facing them.

JANUARY 31


I believe, also, that the Christian theism of the future will be essentially Christian; not in any narrow, petty, theological sense, but in the large, happy recognition of the Universal Father as he has been interpreted to us in the spirit of Sonship. It will be Christian for the all-sufficient reason that no other form of theism is so rich in spiritual contents, or supplies to individuals and societies so ample and adequate a basis and so inspiring a motive for noble living on such broad lines of culture or progress. For Christian theism means vastly more than faith in the sonship of Jesus; it means the sonship of mankind; it means that all men may say "Father"; it means the sharing of the divine by the human. It gives to each one of us inward access to the Source of every form of truth and good; it throws open the resources of infinity and eternity; it offers wisdom for the mind, love for the heart, energy for the will—perpetual inspiration.

February

FEBRUARY 1

CHRISTIANITY

IT seems to me a matter of great importance that we should live and move in the mid-stream of true Christianity; that we should take and keep our place in the grand historic procession of which Jesus is the honored prince and captain; that we should accept with gratitude and reverence our membership in the visible church which is called by his name, and which draws its peculiar life from his character and teaching, which is the living monument to his divine mission, and which continually calls us by all its holiest voices to communion with his Father and ours. Our own better purposes are immature and hesitating; we need to be protected, encouraged, and enriched by the grand traditions of piety and charity, by the deep-hearted hymns of devotion, and by the shining example of apostles, saints, and martyrs.



FEBRUARY 2

What is the central and distinguishing thing in Christianity, or that which makes it differ from other religions? I find its essence in the emphasis it places on man's spiritual kinship to God, and in its simple reliance on the power of divine truth and love to produce in man a character worthy of that kinship. It is the religion of Nature and reason better understood, loftily taught and illustrated in a personality, vitalized by the original creative force which we call the Holy Spirit, and continuously transmitted from soul to soul and from age to age.

FEBRUARY 3

Equal rights, fair play, public spirit, general welfare, popular education, diffusion of intelligence, the distribution of benefits, physical and spiritual development, the perfectibility of mankind, are not New Testament phrases, but they all spring from the spirit which seeks to make man wiser and better; and it is a poor, blind Christianity that cannot recognize its own allies or its own offspring. Good will and good sense

are quite as Christian as creeds and sacraments. Was it not a union of good will and good sense which made Jesus the teacher of his people? Let us have good will and good sense, then let us judge whether the creeds and the sacraments help or hinder. Let us recognize and honor the present God, manifest in the time and place we now inhabit, — manifest in Nature and in man, in matter and in mind, in science and in aspiration; then it will be easy to profit by the word that came to holy men in ancient times. Let us but see the sacredness of those human lives which are every day commingled with our own; then we may understand how the love of the brother whom we have seen is all one with the love of the God whom we have not seen.

FEBRUARY 4

RELIGION

We must have something that can be called religion, — the soul must be held by some anchorage to spiritual realities, — or we drift helplessly and hopelessly. Without God, the universe seems aimless and unintelligible. Without the law of duty, life seems ignoble and vulgar.

Without the gospel of love and redemption, the progress of man seems hopelessly blocked by his own imperfections. Without immortality all human history seems like a path leading nowhere.

FEBRUARY 5

There is crying need of a religion that shall be natural and rational, so that we can find the soil and germ of it in ourselves; inclusive, so that it will take in all forms of truth and good, known or to be known; practical, so that it will cover every need of our inner and outer life; portable, so that a man can always have it with him and carry it wherever he goes; robust, so that it will bear exposure and enjoy hard work; and simple, so that all of us can understand it.

FEBRUARY 6

We want truth without cant; zeal without rant; reverence without pretense; and religion shorn of sham and nonsense, — a religion which shall not only be as real and natural as life, but shall be identical with life.

FEBRUARY 7

The religion of the private soul — if we can ever get down to it, or up to it — must prove to be also the public religion of the universe; and it is the religion taught and lived by him who had a right to say, what each one of us must yet learn to say, — “I and my Father are one.”



FEBRUARY 8

There must be a great deal of unrealized religion; a great deal that does not go by that name. So far as our interest in anything is orderly, reasonable, and unselfish, it is religious. The charm that draws us toward science, art, literature, music, beauty, friendship, or even amusement, is not undivine. All these are doors which open upward for those whose faces are set that way; or they are shining ladders by which angels ascend and descend on ministries of helpfulness.



FEBRUARY 9

I am not satisfied with that definition of religion which calls it “man’s effort to perfect

himself." It is that, indeed; but it is much more than that; it includes our recognition that God seeks our perfection: it includes perpetual revelation, continuous inspiration, the gentle upward drawing and the soft inward leading of "that power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." It includes also the cumulative results of the world's best experiences; it includes the communion of saints through the ages. While we try to act, we are acted upon. Heaven and earth, God and man, are in close contact; taken together, they make the world.



FEBRUARY 10

A TRUE RELIGION

A true and adequate religion must not take away our personal liberty, but must become a part of it—must respect it, confirm it, and increase it. The adequate religion we are looking for must, therefore, accord with human nature, and adapt itself to it, working steadily for its development and perfection. It must promote intelligence and satisfy it. It must recognize and refine all natural sentiments.

It must inspire and guide conduct, so that,

whatever we do, *all* will be a part of our religion, because it is part of our complete life.

Then, it must cover all our relations, — in the family, neighborhood, city, State, — the broad human world. The use we make of our time, our industry, our influence, the way we get and use money; the part we take in politics and social life, — an *adequate* religion must include them all.

FEBRUARY 11

RELIGION OF THE TWO COMMANDMENTS

Ours is the Religion of the Two Commandments. We build on the Fatherhood and the Brotherhood, because these two truths belong together and complete each other. To reverence the Supreme Perfection, to aspire and grow toward it in the spirit of trusting and obedient sonship, — this is our worship. To apply truth to life, to put power to good uses, to honor the divine humanity in ourselves and our fellow-beings, — this is our ethics. To unite such worship and such ethics, so as to convert faith into faithfulness, — this is our religion. This union of trust in the unseen with self-respect and equal

respect to our brethren we believe to be the method of Jesus.

FEBRUARY 12

But do not these facts and such as these all indicate that we are living in a period of great spiritual awakening and discovery? Man is finding new worlds in himself; new and glorious possibilities for the individual and for the race; new reasons and motives for living and for living well; new resources in Nature and in the soul, which seem like shining revelations of the generosity of God; new meanings in sacred phrases too long worn smooth; new values in history; larger interpretations of the methods by which the race has been educated from the first. And with these discoveries religion is becoming at once a matter of clearer reason and deeper reverence, of richer experience and holier practice.

FEBRUARY 13

One must, if consistent, be an optimist or an atheist.

Begin to be, and you begin to believe.

FEBRUARY 14 RELIGION OF THE FUTURE

The religion of the future will, therefore, build on foundations already laid in human nature and in history. It will preserve all gains and increase them from the original sources. It will put man into increasing possession of his heritage as a child of the Highest. It will make him free of the universe, — free to help himself to whatsoever things are true, useful, and fair. When men shall dare take “truth for authority and not authority for truth,” the lines of thought will converge, and multitudes will get the advantage of much wise instruction from which they are now excluded by bigotry and prejudice. Then the religious words which have been used in a narrow sense will expand with new meanings; great things will become greater and venerable things more venerable; common things will shine with uncommon light; religion will no longer be a matter of Sundays and ceremonials and professions and beliefs; it will be a matter of life. Then eating and drinking, planting and building, buying and selling, printing newspapers and holding elections, will be a part of divine service, like prayer and praise; and men will hold

communion with the Highest through sympathy and helpfulness toward the lowest.

FEBRUARY 15

Some of the manifestations and tendencies of our time seem to give us in outline the Religion of the Future. We may be sure that it will rest on the basis of theism. For, while thoughtful men can no longer think of the Supreme Being as sitting on a local throne in the sky, nor as working in the world like a mechanic, there was never a time when the universe seemed so full of life, of light, and of power; never a time when the nature and needs of men pressed so urgently for a trustworthy ground of spiritual repose. The silent order of the Kosmos testifies, the sanity of creation demands, a pervading Mind; the deep cry of the human soul is for the living God.

FEBRUARY 16

He does not call us to leave the world and attend to religion, but to attend religiously to the world.

FEBRUARY 17

The test of religion is truth, self-fidelity, absolute honesty and sincerity; and the same is true of morality. They cannot exist apart. But religion vitalizes morality with a holy passion; it infuses spiritual force; it sweetens duty with joy and deepens it with love of God and man. Morality without religion is cold and hard. Morality alone leads along the common level of respectable well-doing; but religion points upward and gives us wings to rise. For religion depends on inspiration; it is the perpetual rebirth of the spirit, the implanting of a higher principle of life by the creative Power.

FEBRUARY 18

MORALITY

The same loving wisdom which provides our daily food gives also the light of truth which is necessary for our guidance toward moral excellence. What we call commandments are not merely stern requirements, but kind advice; what we call threatenings are not harsh menaces, but merciful warnings; what we call the moral law is not our taskmaster, but our best friend;

and every word of sound instruction is like a clause in the title-deed which secures our spiritual inheritance.

FEBRUARY 19

Any man is a sinner who is not so good as he knows he might be, who is living below the standard of excellence prescribed by his nature, his powers, and his opportunities. Any man is a sinner who, with the best within his reach, chooses the second-best. Yet his sin consists not so much in the wrong act as in the wrong state.

FEBRUARY 20

Even for those who are living well there may come a clear call to live better. Then merely to live well will be sin.

FEBRUARY 21

Heaven is sinlessness; but sinlessness is not heaven. There is sinlessness below us as well as above. . . . There was a time when no creature

on earth was capable of sin. . . . Sin entered only when a creature appeared who heard in his own conscience the law, "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not." . . . But there is sinlessness above us as well as below; and we can move upward.

FEBRUARY 22

We cannot give ourselves credit for any more virtue than we intend; and *if we intend well, it always means that we are being led by the Spirit of God.*

FEBRUARY 23

No genius of science or philosophy or poetry can fly so fast or so far but the law of duty will be there to keep it company and take command.

FEBRUARY 24

THE CHURCH

To lead and uplift the age, the church must be of the age, yet above it and in advance. It must have in abundance the life which it is called to give. It must bring light into the

darkness of the world, and shame its sins by self-denying purity. It must prove there is a God by being godly, a heaven by being heavenly. It must be fully charged with that love which carried Jesus to his great sacrifice, — the enthusiasm of humanity, — the passion for seeking, saving, serving.



FEBRUARY 25

There was never a time when such a church was more needed for our guidance, uplifting, and cheer. We need it to take off the strain of modern life, to counteract the feather-brained tendency of the times, to correct our false standard of values. We need it, also, to help us sanctify and consecrate all the precious gains of science, art, and literature; we need it to redeem our week-day life from materialism and vulgarity. We need it to save liberty from lawlessness, and law from heartlessness. We need it to hallow our social sentiments and to hold reform and philanthropy to the highest standard.



FEBRUARY 26

The real authority is not in the church, but in the truth and goodness it stands for; not in the books or in the teacher, but in the light that enters the mind; not in the messenger, but in the message, as received by the reason and the conscience.



FEBRUARY 27

OF CHURCH-GOING

It is not the church alone which suffers enfeeblement by the absence of men from religious services; the family misses a sweetening and hallowing influence; society grows less refined and is held together by looser ties; the world of business and politics is more coarse, hard, and wearing; the blood which circulates in civilization is debased, because a large part of our population is not reached by the finest forces.



FEBRUARY 28

Every habitual churchgoer is a continuous invitation to others to attend; and every habitual non-churchgoer is a continuous invitation to stay

away; while those who attend or not according to their moods must give everybody the impression that they regard their spiritual culture and the religious welfare of society as matters of small importance, — on a level, perhaps, with the reading of the Sunday paper, or a little lower!

**FEBRUARY 29**

A good lesson was taught to some of us in early life: Never to sing a hymn without thinking of the words; never to listen to a prayer without trying to pray; never to let the poor things in a sermon make us miss the good things; never to use the name of God, or any sacred words, in such a way as to wound another's reverence or weaken our own. And the services of Sunday do not help us much unless their influence uplifts the other six days of the week.

March

MARCH 1 SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND LIFE

A SPIRATIONS are inspirations.

He who is true to the best he knows
to-day will know a better best to-morrow.



MARCH 2

Yes — deeper than conduct or speech are the
vibrations of a man's spirit.



MARCH 3

Cultivate conductivity! Fit yourself to re-
ceive and impart all forms of good.

In-taking and out-giving — getting good and
giving good; that is our main business.



MARCH 4

In planning and ordering our affairs, we ought to consider spiritual supplies as necessities of life; as luxuries, if you please, but certainly as necessities. The bread of earth for the body; the bread of heaven for the soul.

MARCH 5

Spiritual culture comes in part from knowing the best things that have been said and done in other times, and that are being said and done in our own times.

MARCH 6

Spiritual growth is not expansion alone; it is an inward enrichment. Not mere bigness, but fullness of being is what we seek. It is the unfolding of faculties, powers, principles, and qualities we did not know we possessed.

MARCH 7

Spiritual growth, therefore, is an endless approximation to the divine perfection. "We shall be like Him"; that is our model; that is the goal of our aspiration. In the daring and awful language of St. Paul, "to be filled with all the fullness of God"! What inward transformations all this must mean! What growings and out-growings! What sheddings-off and castings-out of coarser and baser stuff that we now cherish as part of our precious selves! What disciplines of trial and loss! What clearings and enlargements of thought! What deepenings and refinings of feeling! What washings of regeneration and renewals of the Holy Spirit! What births and rebirths, from form to form, till we reach the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His perfection! Will eternity be long enough?

MARCH 8

Only musical words can respond to musical sounds. Only by spiritual faculties can spiritual

things be discerned. Only our higher nature can forecast our higher destiny.

MARCH 9

What, then, is spirituality? It is a life according to the higher and deeper *reason*, a life guided by moral intelligence which sees the right and chooses it; which loves the good and forever seeks it; which perceives the law and voluntarily obeys it; which rises into a region above the senses, where the love of wisdom and virtue becomes a kind of native air.

MARCH 10

Creation is not merely an apparatus for manufacturing suns and earths; for producing crystals and plants, and animals with red blood and nerve-threads. It is also an apparatus for producing souls — beings that can exercise self-knowledge and self-direction, read the signs of their Maker's presence, learn His will, and feel themselves His children and heirs of His kind of life.

MARCH 11

We impair the divine life-principle, the only hope and help for souls, whenever we undermine reverence, weaken trust, chill affection, stupify conscience, or obscure reason.

**MARCH 12**

Spiritual truths — even the great truths of God's Fatherhood, man's sonship, and immortal life — remain inert and unfruitful so long as they are held in the understanding as mere theories, resting only on authority and tradition. However imposing as hearsay, they acquire power and confer life only when they become truths of insight and facts of experience. The instruction must come not in word only, but in power, and attended by the Holy Spirit.

**MARCH 13**

The calling of Abraham is a call to us. That ancient word is forever repeated; new and fresh as the morning; soft and noiseless as the whisper

of the sunlight, as it touches our slumbering eyelids. The creative spirit still creates, still broods and breathes all abroad and over the face of the inner deep; still says, "Let there be light," and there *is* light.

MARCH 14

Oh, that we all might "come" when we are called! There must be a movement on our part — an inward movement which will bring us nearer to the perfect intelligence by our more quiet reasonableness; nearer to the perfect holiness by the cleansing and refining of our affections; nearer to the perfect love by the unselfish blending of our life with the life of all our kind. Then we shall know Duty by her other name, which is Delight. Then we shall feel in our own slow moral transformations the re-creating power drawing us upward. Then we shall follow with confidence the guiding Hand that beckons forward through all the shadows and the storms. And in the voice of death itself, what can the trusting soul hear but a soft, musical whisper out of the higher mystery — *Come!*

MARCH 15

Here is matter for caution and encouragement. There are mysteries which we cannot penetrate; yet, if we care to learn anything thoroughly, it will lead to something more. Every truth or fact, every event or experience, will prove a key to unlock the door to the next apartment of reality. But when we come up to blank walls with no doors, or to doors for which we have no keys, our part is to be patient, trustful, glad, and faithful to what we have found.

MARCH 16

A brave and clear-sighted faith will look on difficulties as divine calls and opportunities; as challenges to soberness, thoughtfulness, and divine enterprise.

MARCH 17

Divine re-inforcements are always at hand; and to work along the line of improvement is to work with God.

The light that lighteth every man will grow clearer and wider, if faithfully followed.

MARCH 18

The faith that makes faithful — the faith that works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world — is a much more thoroughgoing matter than mere assent to a body of beliefs.

MARCH 19

There is no comfort or sanity except in trusting; no peace but in believing. We must walk by faith and not by sight. For always the unknown must be more than the known; and this must be true of the highest and wisest archangel as of the weakest and lowest child of earth. Surely the matters of which we know least are not uncared for. The stars held their courses for ages before there was a true astronomy; human digestion went forward for ages before there was a science of physiology; the Father of

mankind cared for men for ages before they called on His name.

MARCH 20

Continual prayer — what is that but the steady beating of a true heart in love with duty? The continual answer — what is that but the incoming of new power for the doing of duty, and of new peace because duty is done?

But this means a life well ordered, it means a habit of doing one's best, and of asking what is one's best. It means a refusal to be interrupted by the intrusion of affairs which belong outside our sphere. It means the turning of a deaf ear to the alluring voices that call us backward, downward, or aside from our chosen path. It means an intent listening and glad response to that other Voice which ever calls from above: "Come up higher; this is the way; walk ye in it!"

MARCH 21

The unspiritual man has intelligence, and in that respect he may be far above the animals.

He may even be a scientist, a *savant*, a philosopher. But if his intelligence is directed only to the physical and non-moral aspects of the world, he has not yet discovered that he is a spirit.

MARCH 22

Our spirits discover spiritual facts as truly as our senses discover physical facts.

By the right use of things seen and temporal we shall rise into communion with things unseen and eternal.

MARCH 23

The supreme need of our age is not that we should pay less respect to things seen and temporal, but vastly more to things unseen and spiritual.

MARCH 24

The school is for the pupil, not the pupil for the school; the body is for the mind, not the

mind for the body; the world is *for the soul*, not the soul for the world.

MARCH 25

In all ages men have deeply felt this helplessness and need. They have instinctively reached out for something they could take hold of as a word of God, or a divine manifestation, a revelation of things unseen. How they have gazed at the sky, as if it might open! How they have listened, as if the silence might be broken by a voice! How they have cried into the air, as if there must be an ear to hear their prayers!

MARCH 26

Little as we know, shortsighted as we are, we can discern a high and loving purpose in the creation and development of mankind. There is a movement upward, toward higher levels of life. This gives to human history a worthy meaning, object, and outcome, namely, to bring mankind

to the knowledge and love of the highest good; to produce a heavenly race out of earthly beings. All things lead up to this, — all experience opens upward into the spiritual order. This explains all, justifies all, glorifies all.

●

MARCH 27

Hail, son and heir of God! The world is your Father's house and yours. Live in it as a child at home. Fear not; it is His good pleasure to give you the kingdom. All things are yours, and you are welcome to take possession as fast as you can grow and learn. Trust the Power which cares for you here to care for you forever. You were brought here for something; in due time you will be taken elsewhere for something more. But begin now to move onward and upward, and the way will open for your long advance. Head up! Heart up! The earth is a star among the stars. Beware you do not despise it, nor defile it, nor profane it!

●

MARCH 28

RESURRECTION

There is a view [of the resurrection] which finds favor with all men whose faith, hope, and love are vital facts, namely: That such a kind of life as Jesus possessed must be in its nature an indestructible fact—a fact over which the mere falling away of the body could have no power.

MARCH 29

IMMORTALITY

A man cannot rest his hope of immortality on anything, however beautiful, that perishes before his eyes.

Where can he rest it? I think he must discover within himself a *kind of life* which lifts him above the perishable and unites him with the eternal; a kind of life which has in it a *rising power*.

MARCH 30

There are questions too great for us to answer; but, since they are not too great for us to ask, they affect us like prophecies; they make us feel

that we, too, are being carried forward to a destiny commensurate with our outlook toward infinity.



MARCH 31

Mankind have outgrown many scientific and religious notions; the path of the world is strewn with the wrecks of disused tools and disused opinions and disused institutions. But among what people has the idea of a future state ever been once accepted and then rejected? Men do not so much hold the faith of immortality as it holds them.

April

APRIL 1

FUTURE LIFE

DOES the fact that we are temporarily placed in these earthly conditions forbid us to hope for something more? No; it makes this life look like a starting-point and an opportunity; it makes death look like a new starting-point for a new opportunity.

•

APRIL 2

What we call matter glides from one shape to another, but not a particle of it perishes. Every atom is immortal and every atom retains its identity. If these force-centers were conscious, each of them could say, "I am, I was, I shall be!" Science cannot tell us of what stuff the world is made, or *how* the atom holds its existence; but it affirms that the absolute unit of matter is indi-

visible and indestructible. Is spirit alone to die and go utterly into nothingness?

APRIL 3

What! wise processes and perfect effects in physical Nature, and nothing of the kind in the realm of life and mind? Nothing to come of it all but a series of animal forms lighted up by a transient spark of intelligence, and then going out in everlasting night? What! ample provision for every appetite of the body, and none for the hunger of the soul? Not a mouth of fowl or fish or creeping thing without something to put in it, and the noblest creation of all left to starve?

APRIL 4

Our desire to live forever is helped by finding it worth while to live here; and our confidence that we shall live forever is strengthened by our acquiring a kind of life that seems fit to last.

APRIL 5

God help us to be bold and trustful enough to see and say that whether the body of Jesus came again to life or not, the Power that made us is able and willing to do for us and in us whatever is necessary for our present and everlasting welfare.

APRIL 6

JESUS

Jesus did not come to improve the original plan of the world, but to work toward its fulfillment.

APRIL 7

What, then, is peculiar to Jesus? This: that he did read the mystery of spiritual life; that he did realize this unity with God so clearly and vividly as to become its interpreter for all the rest of mankind.

APRIL 8

The sign of divinity in Jesus which all can read and understand is not miracle, but love. He loved and served mankind. He lived and

acted as if he were possessed by that Eternal Goodness which is forever giving itself to all the creatures. Wherever the spirit of self-giving appears, — wherever there is a pure heart of compassion and a wise method of helpfulness, — there the Son of God is manifest to take away our sins. Wherever wisdom is unselfish enough to guide the ignorant and instruct the foolish and recall the straying, there is the true Christ. Wherever knowledge goes out to service, and men use power to bear one another's burdens, there God is manifest in the flesh. And whoever he may be who can teach men how to live together as brethren and children of one Father, — doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God, — let us gratefully hail him as the Anointed, and cry, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" The all-sufficient proof of the true Messiahship is in the power to overcome evil with good.

APRIL 9

Oh, the deep-hearted boy who could say, "I must be about my Father's business!" Oh, the

high-minded youth who could exclaim, "It becometh us to fulfill all righteousness!" Oh, the divine man who had a clear right to say, "I and my Father are one!" Oh, the unselfish benefactor who could act up to his own teaching and win greatness only by being a willing servant of the lowest and savior of the lost! Oh, the great believer in human nature and in heavenly grace, who could look on a world of men sunk in sadness and sin and yet hail them as brothers and call them to share the perfection of God!

APRIL 10

I suppose that to most of us Jesus represents humanity in its most exalted and yet most natural and rational relations with divinity. Our discipleship consists in learning from him an original relationship with divinity for ourselves. If I have learned his spirit and method, he aims, like every wise and inspired teacher, to help us into complete self-possession; he aims to overcome evil with good, to banish darkness by light, to enlighten, enlarge, and liberate the mind of man by the powers of truth and love. No other

teacher has shown such faith in the high possibilities of human nature when acted upon by divine forces. Who else has dared to say, "Be perfect, like God"?

APRIL 11

The preface to the Fourth Gospel . . . seems to many of us like a deep well of truth. Its mystic words help us to understand Christ as a clearer manifestation of that Divinity whose fire burns or smolders in our own bosoms; of that Wisdom which is older than the world, yet new-born with every babe; of that Life which was with the Father before the world was, but without which not anything ever existed or can exist; and of that Light which is the Sun of the Spiritual Universe, but which is like a dim spark within every rational mind.

APRIL 12

Oh, it is good to believe in a spiritual leader who does not bid us cringe and crawl, but rather to stand erect and aspire; who addresses every one of us as if we might be perfect, like God!

APRIL 13

We must learn to look at Jesus in a new way. Instead of painfully trying to make out just what happened *to* him, let us try by sympathy and insight to find out what happened *in* him,— what grace and truth went to the making of him; so that we may get some clearer discovery of what may be done to us, and of what we may do for each other, by the heavenly help.

APRIL 14**THE SPIRITUAL WORLD**

There are fine facts, subtle forces, and gracious experiences not reported in statistics. They receive little attention from the students of physics and politics and economics; they are often hidden from the wise and prudent, but revealed unto babes—unto the humble and simple, the open-minded and loving. It does not seem a superstition to believe there is an atmosphere within an atmosphere; that there is an unseen world, which we all inhabit, and which is as real as the solid globe; that we live under laws and are

acted upon by forces which no science yet knows how to test or measure.

APRIL 15

We are related through our bodies to all the world of matter; and through our spirits to all the world of spirit.

APRIL 16

What, then, is the spiritual world? It includes this state of things where we live in bodies; it includes also any other possible state in which we can ever live at all; it includes all the low conditions, or hells of darkness and evil into which we may sink; and all the heavens, or glories of light and goodness into which we may rise. In short, it includes all beings who are subject to moral law, who are capable of moral conduct, or who share to any degree the quality of rational being. The spiritual world is that order to which man belongs by virtue of his reason and conscience; it is that whole family of beings who share the Spirit of God.

APRIL 17

Let us think in the same way of time. We talk of the wheels of time as if it were rolling on through days and years. No; time is as motionless as space. Duration is an endless bow. Events follow each other in time, as worlds move in succession through space. By these maneuvers we measure space into feet and miles, and time into days and years. But infinity and eternity are changeless and all-infolding. Ah! then we are really dwelling in the infinite; we are now inhabitants of the immortal world; and there is no way out.



APRIL 18

HEAVEN

To get ready for heaven we must attend first to earth. "How shall we live to-day?" may seem a small question when one asks, "Where shall we live forever?" But to the smaller question God gives us a clear answer, for the other He bids us wait. Is not the right use of to-day the best and only preparation for to-morrow and for all the to-morrows?



APRIL 19

If heaven is anything like what we dream, and we were to rise into that state, how petty and pitiful would seem the matters which commonly occupy our thoughts and claim our interests! Our satisfactions and our sorrows would appear shallow and silly.



APRIL 20

What a marvelous hint is here of human possibilities! I can conceive of spiritual beings as living together under such conditions that nobody would hinder and everybody would help; that every one would be left perfectly free to be and do his best, so that each would be enriched by the life of all, and all would be enriched by the life of each. That would be heaven!



APRIL 21

Let us reach high to take what heaven offers; let us reach low and far to share what heaven gives. Let us import new values of power and blessing from the unseen world of realities; let

us export to other lives whatever brightens and cheers our own.

APRIL 22

If heaven is heaven because God is there, because of the all-pervading Spirit of Wisdom and Love, — then earth can only become a part of heaven so far as the same Spirit has free course in the minds and hearts of men.

APRIL 23


The world comes right when the man comes right. What it is to each one of us depends on what we are and how we take it. We make our own hells; we can make our own heavens.

APRIL 24


Heaven will come into our lives when we no longer wait to see what others will do, but take for our only rule the perfect law as the finger of God has written it in our hearts!

APRIL 25

The distance between heaven and earth grows less and less as we learn to look for the supernatural in the natural, the miraculous in the common, and the divine in the human.

**APRIL 26****THE GOSPEL**

The Christian gospel seems to me like a vibration from the heart of God, transmitted through human hearts to others; a movement of life, like waves of light and heat, from the center outward to the utmost bounds of His creation, as if He thus imparted something of Himself to us all and through us all.

**APRIL 27**

Theologians have drawn a sharp distinction between law and gospel. Law, they say, represents justice; it is stern and severe; it commands and condemns. The gospel represents mercy; it offers pardon to the offender; it brings deliver-

ance from the inward evil which made him offend. But there is a higher and broader view which reconciles the two and makes them one. It sees grace and good will in the law itself; it finds kindness at the heart of every commandment, and mercy in every penalty. It makes the gospel itself a clearer interpretation of the law, and hears a symphony in all the voices of creation.

APRIL 28

The gospel is no gospel if it does not turn the hearts of men toward each other, as well as toward God. It is no gospel if it does not unite all believers in wise, well-considered, and earnest movements for the cleansing of the world and the better ordering of all human life.

APRIL 29

NATURE

The lesson of the springtime and the lesson of the Christian gospel seem like one story told in two languages. The meaning of both is that

there is a life-giving power at work in outward Nature and in the soul of man. Seeds sprout, trees put forth leaves, flowers open to the sun; so do the faculties of the human mind and the plants of faith, hope, and love grow from feeble beginnings and ripen into fruitfulness of character. The light and warmth of the sun, the wandering currents of air, and the circulating moisture which reaches every root and climbs to every leaf, carry with them the elements of life; and not less surely do the energies of truth and grace refresh and renew in our minds and hearts the qualities which make us children of God.

APRIL 30

Law, order, and the methods of intelligence are everywhere, and they address themselves to *us*. With what uniformity and precision the natural forces do their work! Gravity, electricity, light, chemic agencies for which we have no adequate names, — they work their mighty task, and they dance their endless waltz, down among the atoms, up among the globes, without jostle or jar. The solid rocks are not still; the moun-

tains and continents cannot keep their seats; they form and change and vanish like clouds; but law maintains its throne, worlds without end. Whether we look up through the telescope or down through the microscope, whether we turn up the clods and stones to read the geological records of the old centuries, or watch the ripening fruit of summer orchards and the melting of winter snow-crystals, we learn the same lesson. There is no accident, no chance, no fate, no blindness; everywhere there is wise method and orderly activity.

May

MAY 1

NATURE (*concluded*)

WHEN this childish creature is once wide awake, he finds himself an inhabitant of infinity. Consider for a moment how we are compelled to think about boundless space and boundless time. The mind makes excursions among the stars, it penetrates further than any ray of light ever comes from; but it finds no outside wall to the universe. Upward we gaze into boundlessness; downward into boundlessness; on every side, boundlessness. Imagination tires itself in looking backward through years, centuries, eons, backward through beginnings beyond beginnings; then forward and forward through uncounted ages stretching toward the unknown future; yet finding no morning, no evening to this everlasting day. Who has not tried to take these outlooks into infinite space and infinite time? How came it about? Well, we have moved a little space and looked through

a little distance; we have lived through a succession of hours and days; we have invented yard-sticks and clocks; and out of these seeds of things measurable have grown our conceptions of things immeasurable, and we have learned that we are inhabitants of eternity. Here we find ourselves poised amid those vast solemnities and grandeurs, poised amid the blaze of countless suns, our own speck of a planet keeping step in the mighty procession which sweeps on and on to a destiny which no science can forecast.

MAY 2

We who dwell in cities are in danger of missing much of the richness and joy of existence. We breathe the common air, which flows to us in broad currents, now from the inland hills and now from the salt ocean. The light shines around us, and reveals our splendors and our squalor; the cloud-curtains are drawn to and fro by invisible hands; the everlasting greatness of the sky bends above our heads; there is the ancient pathway of the stars, which blaze un-

dimmed, as they blazed for the Syrian and Chaldean watchers in the far-away morning of time. In solemn grandeur, the stately procession of days and nights moves on, and we move with it, despite our unsteady steps.

But to all this wonder and glory we may be almost blind. We have little leisure for communion with Nature. We are distracted by what we call our affairs.

His sun, His rain, His air and clouds, His days and nights, His sky and stars; and we, His children, dwelling in the midst of His glorious creation — this house of many mansions! Out of respect to Him, as well as for our own advantage and delight, we do well to meditate on this whole order of things in which we find ourselves.

MAY 3

FAITH IN GOD

Faith in God is something far deeper and more vital than any theory or opinion about God; and it draws after it immense consequences in logic and in life.

MAY 4

This quality of self-evidence belongs to all the truth by which we live. It does not rest on argument; it shines by its own light, like sun and star. Our faith in God and right must rule by its own authority. It matches all needs, answers all questions, satisfies all aspirations. These things belong to the Spirit's witness to spiritual realities.

MAY 5**BELIEF IN GOD**

We could hardly come upon a more practical and searching subject. Does our belief in God do anything for us? Does it "work in us to will and to do according to His own good pleasure"? Does it set our life to the key of its own grand music? Does it restrain our self-will, and fill us with aspiration, courage, confidence, gladness? As we learn better the conditions of welfare for ourselves and others, do we mend our ways and manners accordingly? Do we regard the laws we believe in as binding? Or do we let ourselves drift with the currents of custom and tradition, or of personal caprice and appetite?

In short, as new light comes to us, does new life come with it?

MAY 6

To believe in God is to believe that there is a wise and good purpose within and behind our lives and our world. To love and serve God means simply that we shall try to make that purpose ours.

MAY 7

To believe in Him is to believe in our own Christ-like possibilities as children of the Highest; to believe that the innocence, sweetness, and sacred charm of infancy can be raised into the holier innocence of matured virtue, the richer sweetness of wise and loving manhood and womanhood, the diviner charm of moral beauty, ever unfolding like a flower from the bud.

MAY 8

LOVE TO GOD

To love God is to attach ourselves to the Best we know; to accept the True so far as we can

learn it; to obey the Right wherever it is shown to us; to put all our powers to good uses for ourselves and our fellow-beings; to incorporate into our being the loveliness of the world and the influences that bring us into communion and harmony with all pure beings; to conform our lives to the beautiful order of that creative wisdom which works in stars and souls.

MAY 9

Love to God and love to man, taken together, would lead us toward a perfect life and perfect social order. And they must be taken together; they cannot live apart. Love to man has no vitalizing root in the heart that lacks love to the Supreme Good; and love to God is a sterile sentiment in the heart that is indifferent to humanity.

How simple and easy, how natural and reasonable, yet how deep and mighty, how grand and sublime our religion becomes, when we approach it by this open door of *love*! Love worketh no ill; God is love.

MAY 10

Love to God includes the love of truth, which makes all science possible and useful; the love of goodness, which is at the heart of all rectitude; and the passion for perfection, which leads toward every excellence.

Love to man includes wise and rational love of self. It includes the love of justice, which renders every man his own; the love of mercy, which renders good for evil; and the love of service, which would set each one of us in society to co-operate for the common weal like the fingers of a hand.

**MAY 11**

Whatever works toward harmony, that is the love of God. Whatever guides toward true welfare and righteousness, that is the light of God.

**MAY 12**

We may lightly love play, because it pleases, rests, and refreshes; Nature, because it yields a thousand benefits and opens a world of beauty


and instruction; mankind, because all men are one kindred and capable of a divine dignity and destiny; truth, because it is suited to the needs of intellect and heart. And if we love the Eternal because we aspire to share His qualities of holiness, justice, and benevolence, how can we ever sink into sadness, or suffer long from poverty of spirit or outward misfortune?

MAY 13

We need not look far to find the God we ought to love. If we could see Him sitting on a throne in distant skies, surrounded with awful splendors and clothed with power and glory, could we love Him merely as a king? But what if within ourselves a soft voice calls us to turn from evil to good? What if in the very silence we feel a gentle drawing toward a better life? Can we not love this inward Presence, this holy prompting, this tender friendship, which ever seeks our welfare? When we feel these sacred influences, we have found the God we ought to love; we have met the Father of our spirits.

MAY 14**CHILD OF GOD**

As rose-bushes were meant to bear roses, so it was meant that man's thought should blossom into houses, furniture, tools, machinery, ships, railroads, governments, schools, literatures, churches, arts, civilizations. But man loses his supremacy, and turns his blessings into curses, when he forgets that this is God's world and that he is God's child; when he forgets that he is a spirit, and lives like a beast; when he forgets to ride the world, and wallows in it like a swine in mire; when he perverts the inspirations of divine wisdom into encouragements for sordidness, selfishness, and sensuality. It is not enough to discover the earth; we must discover the soul. No matter how excellent or elegant a habitation, the quality of the inhabitant is all and everything.

**MAY 15****SONSHIP TO GOD**

Sonship to God is not merely a form of doctrine; it is a living experience, a fountain of

pure worship, an inspiration to every good word and work.

I think we should frankly and unanimously say that this faith in the sonship of Jesus would be dead and worthless if it did not draw after it faith in our own sonship—faith in the sacred bond which unites us to his Father and ours.

MAY 16

To produce from the earth a race of beings who can know themselves sons of God—oh, this alone would indeed make our little planet shine among the stars; this alone would crown the works of creation; this alone would give a fair return for all the tremendous outlay of wisdom and power; and this alone would compensate for all the toils and woes of the ages!

MAY 17

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

May it indeed be true that, above all and through all, the spirit-ear can catch the notes of

eternal victory, and the chorus of Alleluias because the kingdoms of this world are already the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ? How else could an all-knowing and all-loving Creator bear the disorders and miseries of His own world, if He were not the inhabitant of eternity, so that all that is to come, as well as all that we call past and present, is a part of His unchanging Now?



MAY 18

The kingdom of God is within; it is *good government established in the mind*. This secures self-possession — a quality which all men covet and admire. A man whose mental poise is undisturbed in the midst of difficulties can never be taken at a disadvantage. . . . This is partly a matter of temperament; but it is also a matter of self-training, of spiritual culture, and of economy in the management of one's forces. Especially is it a matter of receptivity; of habitual openness to the power and peace of the heavens.



MAY 19**FINDING GOD**

We are saved by faith, by hope, by love. We find God, as the mountain-stream finds the sea, by obeying "the great forces, wise of old"; by following the lead of the sacred instincts that awaken in our hearts and minds. Do not tell me they are dreams, and that reason alone is our guide. Reason itself awakes and works without our bidding; and reason would go mad, if it were not continually inspired and supported by a life beyond its own. And true faith is a form of reason; so is hope; so is love. Without these, the light of intellect is mere phosphorescence; it can show us only phantoms; and, as they fade away, we seem to fade along with them; for then our only creed must be that "everything is naught, and naught is everything."

**MAY 20**

Men do, indeed, find God in their clearer ideas and perceptions of order in the natural world; they find Him in the inward stirrings of reason and conscience. They find Him in the retribution which follows wrong-doing; in the gracious

calls to penitence and the comforts of pardon. They find Him in their own humble sense of need and dependence. These lessons are folded up in the experiences that are common to mankind in every land and time. But most of all and best of all, God is found when men become just and kind to each other; for through our brotherhood we realize the Fatherhood and verify our sonship.

MAY 21

Self-discovery, when it goes deep enough, is God-discovery.

You find your Heavenly Father whenever you find in yourself the spirit of obedient, trusting, loving sonship.

To share the life of God, and to know that we share it, is to be placed beyond doubt.

MAY 22

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

The knowledge of God is not to be sought alone in the facts which our senses report; it

must be found in spiritual experiences and in human manifestations of Godlike qualities. I must often repeat that man is the evidence of God, and the best man is the best evidence of God. But the evidence *must* be addressed to a competent state of mind.

MAY 23

SEEING GOD

No man hath seen God at any time; but the invisible things appear in the visible. As power and wisdom appear in the works of Nature, so do love and holiness appear in our conscience. Over and over again must I say that man is the proof of God, and that the best man is the best proof of God. What countless millions have been helped to discover the divinity in their own imperfect humanity by seeing in Jesus, or some other saintly soul, the brightness of the Father's glory and the true impression or character of His being! Therefore we do know something of God. We know Him in rightly knowing ourselves; that is, in finding what is properly human we discover what is divine.

MAY 24

Thus through the physical agencies and elements, the Eternal Life which we share is ever taking flesh; and we need not look beyond the earth or the hour to find God. The streams of spiritual and divine power are either identical with the currents that flow in our veins, in the winds, the waters, and the play of electricity, or else they make these their channels; no science or philosophy can tell us which. But the First Cause is at work where we are, or not anywhere. The Source of Life for man and beast and grass-blade hides in the sun-rays which play about this dull old planet and make it glow with many-colored pictures and swarm with living creatures. The heavens cannot contain the Infinite, so He must also fill the earth and all its atoms. The Holy Mystery which broods and breeds everywhere, which penetrates and quickens the dust till it leaps into life,—ah! we need not seek its throne among the constellations afar; it is because He lives here that we also are living here. Is not the entire Kosmos filled by one Energy, and upheld by one strong, safe Hand, out of which nothing can ever fall?

MAY 25**WHITSUNDAY**

Of Whitsunday. — It comes fittingly at the season when Nature bears witness to the divine fullness. See how the vital tide rises to flood as spring advances to summer. Earth, sea, and air teem with living forms. Death, destruction, and decay seem only to prepare for new creations. Life may be scanty in our veins, or in our spirits; but there is no scarceness of it in the universe. The giving of life seems to be the great industry of God. It is His way; it is His method of expressing Himself; it is the law of His being.

**MAY 26 HARMONY WITH THE WILL OF GOD**

It grows upon us as a rational conviction and as a happy faith that we need nothing but to live according to Nature; that is, in harmony with the laws of the world. By Nature is meant the whole system of things; and the whole system of things must be an expression of the will of God, as well as His honor and wisdom.

Harmony with the will of God is the same thing as harmony with the natural order.

As our minds open to the light of reason and the discovery of reality, we find ourselves embosomed in the great system of things; we feel that we are taken up and carried along with all the rest by a Power we can never measure nor understand.

MAY 27

THE CREATOR

What foundation, then, is there for our belief in an intelligent Creator? This foundation: there is an intelligible creation. What reason have we for thinking that our life came from a higher source? Because we could not give it to ourselves. What reason for trusting to a Universal Providence? Because there is universal providence. What reason for believing that there is a revelation, or communication between the Supreme Mind and the mind of man? Because man has some knowledge, and he could not be his own teacher. And if you ask, What reason is there for believing in a moral order and a moral law, I must answer: because there is a moral order in ourselves; because a moral law is written in our minds and confirmed by our expe-

rience of good and evil. These are facts — solid as the mountains; and we can build on them our city and our temple, our personal and social life, our secret faith and our common fellowship.

MAY 28

SACRED HISTORY

As one man's wrong-doing may lead many into sin, so by the virtue of one many may be made righteous. Whenever and wherever a strong, brave soul has lifted up the standard of truth and justice, and summoned others to rally to its defense, there we see God in Christ — the manifestation of the Divine Savior in the human brother as really as in the person of Jesus.

Whoever speaks the right word finds a welcome hearing in some prepared hearts. Whoever can see and show the way for other men to walk in, or whoever is strong and masterly enough to take the direction of events, he is chosen king by acclamation. . . . This succession never fails; sacred history is constantly enacted under the leadership and inspiration of the wisest, the best, the strongest.

MAY 29

History is always making. In the wide field of affairs, as in agriculture, man works not alone, but in company with the higher Power. God and man have part in making history. When man is guided by wisdom in the choice of ends and means, and when he works in harmony with the true laws of the world, there is progress, and the history is sacred. When he works out of harmony, and at cross-purposes, there is confusion, and the history is profane. Much of so-called secular history is really sacred; much of church history is really profane. . . .

It may be that, when the whole story of humanity is complete, we shall call it sacred, because we shall then see how wisdom and love have presided over every act and scene.

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MAY 30

How are we to make more sacred history? Just as it has always been made. We are to listen to the clearest and truest voices, without and within, as willing learners listen to their teachers. We are to follow the light wherever

it may lead. We are to make common cause with all who love and serve God and man. We are to overcome evil with good, — to put light in the place of darkness, love in the place of hate, order in the place of confusion, the freedom and joy of the sons of God in the place of bondage and terrorism, the spirit of brotherhood in the place of selfishness and greed. And by winning and teaching as many of the young as we can reach, we are to put these better things into the life of the next generation, in good hope that, where we have labored, others will enter into our labors.



MAY 31

Not one of us need ever wait for the movements of the world or of the church; the poorest, weakest, and smallest of us can be making sacred history every day and every night. For each of us is also an original *cause*; and in doing good *little* things we may set forces in motion which may never again be still; for, after we have labored, others will enter into our labors.

June

JUNE 1

FREE THOUGHT

THERE was never a time when so many people were called to consider so many questions as now. We need all our wits; but we need still more to come to these questions in the right spirit. We need to escape from narrowness, conceit, prejudice, self-interest, and partisanship. These are the modern devils which can be cast out only by the spirit of truth. We must cultivate broader views, broader sympathies, broader methods of conduct and thought. We must be free thinkers or false thinkers. We must either make room in our fellowship for people who honestly differ from us, or shut ourselves into outer darkness. We must either hold ourselves open to suggestions for improvement, or grieve the good Spirit out of our hearts. In thinking freely, we run the risk of error; but in thinking timidly, or wearing blinders, we are sure to miss the truth.

JUNE 2

Hospitality to ideas, whether old or new, is of the essence of mental liberty. The ideas, whether old or new, may not be true, but they are to be fairly treated, for, also, they may be true. Openness to light and a ready welcome for it, — a welcome for every ray that God lets shine, — this is the attitude of a liberal mind.


JUNE 3

Let us be glad also of the diversity of gifts. There are many operations, but one Spirit; many effects from one cause; many instruments and voices, one orchestra. The horticulturist rejoices in a variety of roses springing from culture; why should we not be glad when our Christian culture — God's garden of delights — brings forth a new variety of manhood or womanhood? Here comes a man who says what we never heard before; or he puts the old truth in new phrase. Let him be respectful toward the old; let us be respectful toward the new. The old roses were fair and fragrant; is the new less so? Be it less or more, let it be itself.

JUNE 4


LIBERTY IN RELIGION

To be liberal, then, is to accept for ourselves and for everybody else the free principle and the free method. It is to trust the human mind and give it every opportunity for light and help. It is another name for intelligent justice and fair play, which is willing that everything should stand on its merits and go for what it is worth. It speaks the truth in love, and because the truth is the word of God and the law of blessed life for all mankind.



JUNE 5

The term liberal is never more abused than when it is claimed by those who care nothing for the higher interests of humanity, or for the underlying verities of life. Neither can we call men liberal merely because they are in antagonism to conservative principles and interests, and clamorous for a freedom which rests on no moral foundation. The man who holds nothing as true has certainly not been made free by the truth.



JUNE 6

POWER

So far as the individual is concerned, his power is always limited, and, therefore, his duty is limited. Some voices are telling us that, since the power given us is God's power, it should enable us to do everything, since God's power is infinite. But there is always a limit to the *share* of power which He gives to any of His creatures. All our power is, indeed, derived from God, but it does not follow that we are all-mighty. I do not doubt that faith and love and long progress will enable us to accomplish much that is now impossible; but at every stage of growth our power will be limited; there will never be but One omnipotent.

JUNE 7

All power wisely directed is creative. It produces something; it causes changes, and these changes are always in the direction of a new order, an advance or improvement on existing conditions. When a man thinks, or studies the situation, it is like the hovering of the Divine Spirit above or within the unformed or chaotic

elements. When he plans his work, or puts intelligence into it, he repeats in a small way the mighty fiat of creation, "Let there be light." When he has determined what he ought to do, and then sets about it, he imitates the Power which divided the dry land from the sea and prepared the face of the earth to be the habitation of living creatures. This is all there is of our practical life; power wisely directed to learning and doing. This makes us partners in the work of creation. And this covers all the facts and processes of our existence, within and without, so far as those facts and processes are under our control.

JUNE 8

BODILY LIFE

The sense of our dignity comes from the consciousness that we are capable of all things good and great, and that we are made for a high and honorable destiny. The sense of our frailty and limitation comes from our being shut up in these perishable bodies, which resemble those of the beasts, — bodies which hold us down to the earth and make our very existence here depend

on the coming and going of the breath of our nostrils. When we think of our dignity, it seems easy to believe that we are not much lower than the angels. When we think of our frailty, we feel ourselves kindred to the worms, and life seems hardly worth taking as a gift. Yet, if we forget our frailty, we are apt to abuse our dignity, and to live as if the bodily life were to last forever. We must, therefore, keep together in our theory the two facts which God has put together in our life—dust and a living soul.



JUNE 9

We must all go back to habits of simplicity; to a life less artificial and nearer to Nature; taking it easier and getting more good out of it; neglecting no proper duties, missing no real helps, yet putting into all affairs a deal of quiet common sense, and getting out a deal more of sweetness and joy. This means that brain-workers are to give their bodies a better chance, and that muscle-workers are to have larger opportunities for mental and spiritual culture.

JUNE 10

When shall we believe half enough in the moral value of non-moral things? The physical conditions of human welfare are foundations on which the wise Providence builds the Temple of the Spirit.

JUNE 11

These large and handsome provisions are surely not for the body alone. The true uses of matter and of Nature will serve to develop mind and spirit; and all orderly activities belong to the method of Providence.

JUNE 12

I am speaking of the influence of the body over the mind and the peril of allowing that influence to become dominant or supreme. Yet I must speak also for the vindication and honor of every physical passion and impulse, in subordination to reason. The completeness of humanity is to be reached, not by extinguishing our

passions, but by exalting and refining them, by transmuting them into pure spiritual forces and letting them play their natural and appointed part in propelling the machinery which divine wisdom has constructed. But their intended and proper office is always within the bounds of what is good for ourselves and for others.

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JUNE 13

The more man knows of the physical order, the better he thinks of it; and the more freely he helps himself to its resources, the more he realizes his own dignity as its lord and master. Matter is thus doing great things for mind; we are learning to accept the world as our home, our school, and our temple. The human body is claiming its true place as a servant of the soul; it is neither to be despised, nor feared, nor profaned.

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JUNE 14

The body is not the main part of man; not if the man knows himself. It is a living machine,

and he is its operator. The body is a child of the earth, and must have its earthly rights; the spirit is a child of heaven, and must have its heavenly rights. But the spirit best gets its heavenly rights by giving the body its earthly rights and holding it to its proper uses. There is room for both; each helps the other. But the greater must never be sacrificed to the less.

**JUNE 15**

I suppose there are few young persons of serious principles across whose minds there does not sometimes pass the bright dream of possible and honorable parentage. And what an all-compelling motive is here for guarding the sacred fountain of life; for seeking all pure atmospheres and welcoming all fine influences of earth and heaven; for keeping the spirit serene, the affections untainted, the blood pure! What a motive for patient self-culture, for accepting the discipline of wisdom, and for turning a ready ear to every hint that can lead toward completeness of mind or body!

JUNE 16

Those who are now living on the earth hold in trust the entire vitality of the race. To preserve and improve it is to preserve and improve mankind; to impair and pervert it is to impair and pervert mankind.

JUNE 17

Our twofold nature implies a twofold parentage; namely, that we are children of men by virtue of our bodily life, and children of God by virtue of our spiritual life. Physical parentage is the appointed method by which man is formed of the dust of the earth, that is, of material elements; divine parentage is the method whereby we become living souls.

JUNE 18

The necessity both for working and for resting has its reason in our nature, and is, therefore, a divine law. When shall we half realize that the constitution of man is a piece of sacred legisla-

tion, and that physiology is a department of theology?

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JUNE 19**GROWTH — CULTURE**

Change is the vital condition of historic development. Without change there is no growth. Growth builds itself up on the past, but it also implies an escape from the past, an advance, or movement away from the past. . . .

The advances of knowledge call for changes in our ways of thinking and feeling. The growth of reason and conscience calls for changes in our lines of conduct, a better understanding of the laws of welfare calls for changes in social order and custom. . . .

The existing state of things has indeed a right to continue until good reasons can be given for a change. The burden of proof is always on the side of those who demand such change.

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JUNE 20

As we see this beautiful miracle of progress around us, why may we not be a part of it?

Let us put it into the programme for all our days and all our years, — self-culture, social culture, the growth of humanity in knowledge and goodness. Let us make it both our pleasure and our religion.

JUNE 21

The richness of our inward life depends on the richness of our outward life.

To grow, to become more fully and richly alive, — this is what we are made for.

He who has any measure of life has always the means of getting more ; and this is growth.

JUNE 22

I believe the finest influences and richest blessings that can come from the infinite Fullness will stream toward the man who will habitually take all he can get of every form of good and use it as he has opportunity for the enriching of his own life and the enrichment of all around him.

JUNE 23

We are born heirs to all forms of good. It is a lean and haggard virtue that feeds only on precepts and duties. Wisdom is the product of all our complex experiences, rightly taken. Every sort and degree of culture will qualify us for clearer insight and worthier living. Our minds are cleared of obscurity, and we grow responsive to the touch of reality, by every broadening of our sympathies, every enlargement of our powers, every reverent advance in knowledge, every act of self-denial for righteousness' sake; not by one of these, but all working together.

JUNE 24

How many thousands have found in the higher range of modern literature a new and glad interpretation of themselves and of the world! How many have had their eyes opened to the wrong and folly of blind conformity, and have gathered courage and strength to live by the spirit instead of by the letter, and to heed the inward voice rather than the imperious decrees of tradition,

custom, and fashion! How many have been helped to a sense of the more than Personal Presence that is ever above, around, beneath, within!

JUNE 25

True culture includes much more than the development of intellect, taste, and imagination. It calls for all those qualities that fit us to live together, in the family and in all human relations, wisely, usefully, and happily. It calls for a quick sense and clear perception of "the things of others"; it calls for the training of heart, mind, and hand for whatever part we may bear in the common life.

JUNE 26

Make the tree good; that is the first thing to do, if we really care to fill a worthy place in the world. All that a man can do to deepen, broaden, and enrich his own being by any kind of genuine culture is so much done for the betterment of the world. He need not strain himself

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to be useful; he cannot help being useful if he is cheerful and brave, if he is bright and true, if he is clean and honest.

JUNE 27

The whole system or order of things amid which we live is appointed for our education, our improvement, our correction, our instruction in righteousness, our salvation. All the facts and forces with which we have to do, and which have to do with us, all the agencies and influences which operate on intellect, heart, and will to show us what is good, to persuade us to what is right, and to win us to what is lovely, belong to the system of law and gospel, and serve as means of grace and helps to a true life. Would you have ordinances and sacraments? The world is full of them, if we take it right; there is nothing else.

JUNE 28

We must adopt for ourselves a more thorough system of culture. Instead of pulling out the

naughty weeds, one by one, with thumb and finger and with painful stooping, we must plow them under and leave them to enrich the soil; we must plow deep and sow with liberal hand the better sort of seed; so overcoming evil with good. When we make a thorough business of sowing to the spirit, we may be astonished at the large and blessed results.

JUNE 29

Yet clear intelligence ought to be a means of communication, — a continuous prayer for light and a continuous increase of vision. Rightly taken, there is in all knowledge a fine spiritual quality; it feeds the soul. But when we make knowledge an end, rather than a means, we miss its real significance; for it ministers not to our growth, but to our conceit.

JUNE 30

The understanding — the intellect dealing with the forms and surfaces of things — mimics reason

by "reasoning," or constructing arguments, but they often prove to be like houses built of cobs or cards. The understanding may mislead; the reason never. The understanding is very talkative; the reason is often silent. The understanding is different in different men; the reason is the same in all men. There are many understandings; there is but one reason in the universe. In man it is insight; it is the still, small voice of the soul; it is revelation; it is the meeting-point of the human and the divine. In making fast to reason, we enter into covenant with God; for we fix our hearts on the absolute and eternal. And the wise man is he whose understanding, judgment, imagination, feelings, passions, and intentions are all illuminated, presided over, and harmonized by the reason, the deep law of truth and right.

July

JULY 1

PATRIOTISM

WE shall rise to national grandeur only through the docility which can profit by criticism, the magnanimity which is even-tempered under provocation, and the patient self-fidelity which overcomes its own faults and the world's evil with good.

JULY 2

For what is our grand freedom given us, if not that we may push steadily toward the highest standards of living and the noblest order of society?

JULY 3

As all men are equal before the laws, — when laws are just, — so must you and I take care to

preserve that equality by maintaining the rights and promoting the welfare of those who are least able to guard their own.

JULY 4

The Declaration of Independence calls certain truths "self-evident." But they are not at all evident to minds that are pre-occupied with selfish theories of society, or with a low estimate of human nature.

Proclaim the natural and equal rights of all men to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and what will the proclamation signify to those who impair men's rights for the sake of private or corporate advantage, or for the ends of partisan politics; or to rich and poor who are willing to live by crowding, snatching, and cheating; or to those who prosper by injurious lines of business, like the liquor traffic; or to any of those who obstruct the common avenues to happiness and make the advance of the million more difficult?

JULY 5

Here is the foundation of good society, or of true democracy. It is not in the party platform; not in the Bill of Rights; not in the Constitution of the United States; not in the grand Declaration of Independence. The foundation of true democracy and of social order is deeply and broadly laid; it rests on our faith in the dignity of human nature as the offspring of God.

**JULY 6**

Be it our happy part to publish the word of reconciliation which puts reason in the place of passion and prejudice, and calls all nations to live together in peace. Be it ours to plead ever and everywhere for justice and good will; to rebuke the spirit which divides men into hostile parties and sects and puts into their mouths the watchwords of hatred and scorn. Be it ours to pluck up the roots of bitterness, and to sow in all hearts the seeds of heavenly love. Be it ours to help secure to every human being a fair opportunity to live on the earth without crowding or

being crowded. Be it ours to stand calmly amid the wranglings and hustlings of self-interest in the world of trade and industry and politics, and to say to those who fight for their rights and neglect their duties, "Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another?"

JULY 7

Why should not the "land of the free and the home of the brave" be foremost in proclaiming the Golden Rule as the soul and reason of international law? Why should we not be prompt and proud to ratify every measure which looks toward the peaceful federation of the world and the liberation of human labor from the crushing weight of military burdens? There is no other alternative; we must accept the law of brotherhood, live by it, and prosper together, or we must waste our energies in preparations for open war; preparations which are but a mask for the ugly, chronic strifes of international selfishness. Nations are neighbors.

JULY 8**CHARACTER**

Every hour of every day our discipleship is put to the test. The care we take and the uses we make of our bodies, the government of our appetites and passions, the thoughts and feelings we cherish in solitude, the tempers we exhibit to each other, the principles and motives which control us in industry, trade, and politics, — surely these have far more to do with making and marring our character than our theological speculations and our church professions.

**JULY 9**

To be receptive of truth, of love, of power, and of peace — to take into ourselves and store up in character the fine qualities of humanity and divinity — we must be both active and passive; we must work and pray, and we must observe and reflect; we must seek society and solitude; we must have our wits about us, and yet abandon ourselves to “the great, wise forces.” We must act as if all depended on ourselves, yet trust and rest as if all depended on “the Power

not ourselves, that makes for righteousness." Thus we shall freely receive from One who is ever more willing to give than we are to take.

JULY 10

HEREDITY

The law of heredity, which draws on each generation the sad results of ancestral wrongs, is immensely more fruitful in consequences of good. It is a part of that large and beneficent order of the world by which life is maintained and enriched. We are learning that its true mission is to transmit and accumulate blessings, not curses; harmony, not disorder; health, not disease; virtue, not vice. As evil accumulates, it works its own destruction; but as good accumulates, it produces more abundant life.

JULY 11

By our descent from human parentage we are anchored fast to the human race; and being set in relation to all the past by ancestry, we are set in relation to all the future by posterity. This

is a great and telling fact; it bears on the history of each individual, and on the history of the tribes and nations of mankind.

But there is a greater fact. By our divine origin, or spiritual nature, we are put in relation to all higher beings, and to all higher states of existence, if such there be. But why "if"? Could we conceive of higher beings, or of a higher state, unless something in ourselves made such a conception possible? No more than we could think of a hundred or of a thousand without an arithmetical faculty.

JULY 12

Our mistakes are our schoolmasters; our follies teach us wisdom; we acquire self-control by resisting our own disorderly impulses; the sense of imperfection and failure makes us less hard upon others and sends us toward the true Source of guidance and help. Thus our heredity from God gives us the victory over the weaknesses derived from our ancestors.

JULY 13

In a sense, we continually inherit from each other; we take the direction of our feelings and thought and conduct from the people around us; we derive no small part of the quality of our life from our neighbors and associates as truly as from our fathers and mothers. This puts it in the power of every one of us to do something toward increasing or diminishing the common stock of the world's good or evil.

**JULY 14****RIGHTEOUSNESS**

The ideal still is the perfection of the human through the power of the divine. Righteousness still means voluntary obedience to the perceived law of right; voluntary consecration to the highest known objects; voluntary pursuit of the best, the truest, the purest. But it also means a "very present help." It means God-with-us. It means the co-operation of the divine with the human. Our responsibility is one side of it. God's lovingkindness is the other. Because He is the Almighty, we can depend on Him; because we

are ever in His presence, we can walk before Him; and because He is perfect, we are to aim at perfection. This is the glory of Jewish and Christian theism; it offers the highest possible standards of character and the largest possible help toward attaining that standard.

JULY 15

Our spiritual education and training — the unfolding and activity of higher faculties — must proceed on the principle that lies at the root of *all* education. We must come into *self-possession* and *self-use*; we must deal with reality at first hand. One must learn all righteousness by the practice of it, and by making it a part of himself.

JULY 16

Has the weary search of mankind through the ages found anything better than a righteousness which is rooted in sonship to the highest, and which blossoms into service to the lowest?

JULY 17

Here is the application in the highest realm of life of what the scientific men call natural selection and the survival of the fittest. Choose the best; and then give it the best chance. Look up, live up. Aim toward the highest. Forget those things which are behind, reach toward those things which are before, and press toward the mark! How such thoughts as these make our hearts beat! For, at times, all men feel this nobler passion, this longing for a better life, this hunger and thirst for righteousness. It is like an inward response to some high calling; and we have learned from Jesus to regard it as a sign of our relation to God and the proof that we are cared for by the Eternal Goodness.

JULY 18

And "righteousness" is the one word which reconciles morality and religion. Righteousness is the great word of Old Testament and New. We read very little about religion; hardly anything about morality; but a great deal about

righteousness. It is the perfection of human character; it is the perfection of God. What more can we need than to be *right*? But then we need to be *all* right — right from center to circumference. And to be wholly right is to be holy. So in righteousness we find the essence of morality and the essence of religion.

**JULY 19**

A right life, then, is all we need to concern ourselves about. There can be nothing better in heaven. But a right life means more than the keeping up of appearances; it means more than conforming to good customs and fine manners; it means more than abstaining from cruelty and sensuality. I think it means more than doing justly and loving mercy; it means also walking humbly with God, or trying to conform in temper, spirit, and purpose to the perfect ideal. A right life means purity of motive, rectitude of principle, undivided allegiance to the highest law, holiness of heart, fidelity in the pursuit of truth and good; and then it means wise and worthy

conduct as the outcome and evidence of this inward virtue.

JULY 20

TRUTH

In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is reported as saying to his Father and ours, "Thy word is truth." It would be well for mankind if we humbly dared to read the equation inversely, and say, "Truth is Thy Word!" This would help us to recover the natural, rational, receptive attitude of mind which belonged to the unsophisticated childhood of the world. All life would be religious; all knowledge would be precious and commanding; all verifiable science would take on a biblical dignity; every perception of reality and meaning behind outward phenomena would be welcomed as a revelation; the mind of man would dwell in open and gladsome communion with that Divinity which is not far from any one of us, and in which we live and move and have our being.

JULY 21

The "word of God" is none too strong a term to express *the divine origin and commanding*

authority of truth, however that truth may be presented to the reason and the conscience.

Behind all forces are meanings; all silences are alive and voiceful of wisdom.

JULY 22

We are not the keepers of truth, truth is our keeper. To distrust it is to distrust both man and God.

Hatred of error is never so strong or so wise or so noble as love of truth.

JULY 23

Those are great days for us when some word of truth comes with awakening power; comes as a kindly light, as a heavenly call, as a loving touch. All these transactions are carried on in the mind, but they imply "a Power not ourselves."

JULY 24

In the study of truth we need the intelligence to understand, the heart to desire it, and the will to choose.

JULY 25

There are some views of truth which are more than views, they are experiences. They take possession of us, master us, and give us deep content—peace in believing. They feed us; they are as air to the lungs, as light to the eye, as love to the heart. Such is the doctrine of God's inward witness to the soul's life and the witness of the soul's life to God. It suits and satisfies our nature and our needs.

JULY 26

Here is one sign of truth. It affects us like a part of the permanent order of things; it is all of one stuff with the world and with our own proper nature. It has the ring of reality. Like sunlight, it carries its own evidence, and to the sane mind it recommends itself as sunlight does to the healthy eye. But it is concealed from our

grossness by its own simplicity and transparency. Who realizes this splendid miracle of the common day? In the same way we become too familiar with some of the most obvious and important aspects of spiritual truth.



JULY 27

LOVE AND WISDOM

We do not know too much, but we love too little. How little we are helped by the *knowledge* of the truth till it takes possession of our feeling and our faith.



JULY 28

Knowledge alone cannot reconcile us to life or death; it is trusting love that reconciles; and trusting love means not only submission and acceptance, but obedience.



JULY 29

Food becomes physical force; truth becomes mental force; I think, in the supreme sense, love becomes spiritual force.

JULY 30

Give us love and wisdom and we are safe and sound. As fast as love and wisdom enter into human affairs, we shall move toward a perfect order of society.



JULY 31

We are taught to love with heart, soul, mind, and strength; that is, to give all energies and faculties to the pursuit of the best we know. The piety of the heart means purity of feeling; the piety of the soul, aspiration and worship; the piety of the mind, love and search for truth; the piety of strength, a wise and worthy use of the active powers of body and spirit. Thus love covers every province of experience and conduct.

August

AUGUST 1

NATURE (*Vacation*)

THE passive side of life is quite as real as the active, quite as respectable and quite as fruitful in advantage. What is being done for us all the time by the quiet forces of Nature, or the wide Providence which works in all things, is vastly more than we can do for ourselves. By work we rise above the animal and savage state; but by resting, trusting, and enjoying, we rise above work. Toward that higher state work itself should help to raise us; what else can give it dignity?

AUGUST 2

“The earth is full of thy riches,” sang the psalmist. There must be more of it than we get or guess. Our senses give us but the smallest part. There is fragrance too fine for our nostrils;

there is music inaudible to our ears, flowing from all objects as from harp-strings; there are harmonies of color and endless delicate lights and shades brightening and dusking in swift succession, — all the atoms sing and dance as they are stirred by forces we know not how to name. So we are embowered and embosomed in the all-producing and all-embracing Life; so come thronging upon us intimations of the Universal Presence, as if the unseen were ever shining through the sun, tempering and softening the light to our weak eyes.

AUGUST 3

How gentle are these ministries of Nature, and how helpful because they are gentle! How our distraction is quieted and our fever cooled by a walk among trees! What a serenity seems to descend upon our spirits from the clear blue sky! What a reproof is whispered to our selfishness by the sun that shines for the evil and the good, and by the rain that falls for the just and the unjust! How the hills uplift our thoughts! What a sense of enlargement we feel

beside the sea, and what magic voyages we take to lands beyond! And any wide horizon seems to forbid narrow ways of thinking.

AUGUST 4

Looking on these up-springing forms in garden, field, and forest, how sayest thou, O man, that thy being has no root nor support in the all-producing Power? The processes of intelligence in the mind, the discoveries of truth, the passion for beauty, the stirrings of affection, the compacted forces of will, reason, and conscience, all the deep, silent, subtle activities which give rise to thought, feeling, action, worship, — how can we think God has less to do with these inward wonders, which blossom and fruit in character, than with those lower things which spring from dust and return to dust?

AUGUST 5

So much is going on just out of our sight, in seed and egg, in plant and tree, in the stirrings

of life under the clod, in the vibrations of hidden forces all around and within! We see but a small part of the effects; we see nothing of the causes; yet we see intimations of causes behind and within causes, — an ever-lengthening chain.

AUGUST 6

There is but one Author for all these objects that seem so unlike, — for crystals, mosses, trees, and animals; there is but one Origin for stars and souls. The waves of light that pulsate through the sky-spaces are identical with those that flow from a farthing candle; and they are not unrelated to the light that shines in our minds. When the dull clod is touched by the warmth of the sun, and a mystical form emerges and “climbs to a soul in grass and flowers,” is it so different from the production of wisdom and love in man and woman? Does not the same hidden Power find ways of touching us also?

AUGUST 7

This makes the grandeur of our existence. We are not only inhabitants of this tiny ball; by virtue of our presence here, of our presence anywhere, we belong to the larger unit, to the boundless All. As each of us belongs to the city by living in one of its houses, to the republic by being a citizen of one of its States, to the human race by being the child of a single pair, so do we belong to the infinite realm of matter and spirit by virtue of our small share of its boundless life. It is a mighty and blessed thing to come to this security of our standing in creation.

**AUGUST 8**

Every aspect of Nature affects us in a way of its own; yet all aspects unite in a common impression, like the unlike words that make a sentence, or the consonant and vowel sounds that make a word. The silent and sublime symphony of creation is performed by a vast orchestra; each instrument supports others; each separate note contributes to the completeness, and is both

lost and found in the universal harmony. One breath sweeps through every pipe; one hand touches every key and string. And we are present at the mighty concert, and are a part of it.

AUGUST 9


The impressions made upon us by Nature seem intended to educate our sentiments. They do more than rouse the understanding. They lead out the heart. They beckon us into a more real world than that which is created by our passions and frivolities; they exact, enrich, and refine. They give to fancy and imagination honorable employments; and, if we take them aright, all these influences have a gracious quality which predisposes to reverence and kindness, to the love of God and man. Life without poetry, even religious life without poetry, would be hard and cold and bare and bony. And there would not be much poetry in man if he were to shut out the appeal which Nature makes to his sentiments; if the world around him did not shine in his eyes, and whisper and shout in his ears,

and continually invite him to keep step with her robed procession of days and nights, seasons and centuries.


AUGUST 10

There are these two ways of taking Nature — the poetic and the scientific. The poet sees the rose as a whole — sees it as a picture. He drinks in its form and color just as he inhales its fragrance; it affects him as if it were the living spirit of beauty — a fair sister of his own. The man of science must have a name for it; he must pick it to pieces, study the arrangement of its parts, and compare them with the structure of other flowers. But the moment he begins to admire and wonder and enjoy, he becomes a poet; and he may be all the more a poet because of his knowledge. So in the larger way; the poet *feels* the world which the scientific man only sees and studies. He takes possession of the world through his intellect. The poet lets the world take possession of him through his insight, imagination, and affection. Each sees aspects of Nature to which the other is partly

blind. One hunts for facts to be analyzed and classified; the other reads the expression of the same facts, and sets them to music. These two men enter the temple at different doors. The scientist is more observant of the architecture; the poet faces the altar.

**AUGUST 11**

We are indebted to science for showing us the laws of the world; to poetry for showing us that these laws are alive, — that they are the expression of mind and the movement of love. Science helps us faintly to apprehend how vast and how old and how rich the universe must be; poetry helps us to live in it as children at home, with a joyful sense of relationship to all that is, or was, or is to be. But oversight is necessary to insight.

**AUGUST 12**

The true use of science is not to create in us new principles or powers; but to unfold and

enrich what is born in us. Any measure of insight joined with insight will give us this benefit: for what acts on the sense may also act on the soul. We seem purposely exposed to the impact and influence of Nature, that it may serve our spiritual development. The physical world may, indeed, exist for ends unknown to us; but its highest discoverable use appears to be the education of spirits.

AUGUST 13

Nature itself is not the same to the unspiritual as to the spiritual. To one, it is chiefly a field for the senses; to the other, it is a school and a temple of power and order, of grace and beauty, — a mirror and revelation of things unseen, a book of parables, rich with divine meanings.

AUGUST 14

DUMB ANIMALS

What we call Supernature is never absent from Nature. Something akin to our souls is in grass and trees and stones, as well as in our poor

relations, the dumb animals; and if there are higher beings that people the realms of inaccessible light, they, too, must be our kindred; and we shall slowly climb to their company.

AUGUST 15

It is true that the roots of man's physical being strike downward into the same soil with those of the inferior creatures. It is also true that their intelligence, so far as it goes, appears to be of the same essence with his. Frankly admit it. What then? Shall we not reverently look down as well as up through Nature to Nature's God?

AUGUST 16

NATURE

Do you think Nature can be more friendly to the growth of bird and tree than to the growth of the soul? Can we not trust that the law which works in the clods of the fields and through the summer days will work also in the kingdom of the spirit and through the eternal ages?

AUGUST 17

We need not strain our minds to take in all creation. The nearest fact is a revelation, the commonest process a miracle.

AUGUST 18

I think the world we live in is God's kindergarten. He who has set eyes in man's head, He who has filled the creature with curiosity, and spread around him the thousand spectacles of light and form, of color and motion, must have meant him for a sight-seer; and He must have meant, through the vision of the eye, to unfold the deeper vision of the spirit.

AUGUST 19

Nature is the witness of God.

God and Nature yield their secrets, not to the eye alone, but to the heart.

To believe in the goodness of the Creator is to believe in the goodness of His creation.

AUGUST 20

NATURE, MAN, GOD

How shall we know man? Study Nature. How know Nature? Study man. How know God? Study both Nature and man. There is no clear and sharp boundary between Nature, man, and God. We think a boundary, but we cannot fix nor find any. All the realities are interconnected; each leads to all, and all to each.

AUGUST 21

The doors to God are human doors.

The very prayers one breathes in his closet must be answered by human agency.

We cannot know divinity until we learn to know humanity.

AUGUST 22

We must make room in our minds, in our tastes, in our sympathies, in our religion, and in our lives, for all we can learn both of Nature

and of humanity. We must multiply points of contact — thoughtful and loving contact — with these large, rich regions of God's creation. We ought to know that we live in them as truly as we live in our houses. When we realize this, perhaps we shall be more concerned to brighten and beautify our surroundings, to put away physical and social disorder and ugliness, to cheer the lives of our daily companions, and to uplift mankind to the levels of truth, justice, and good will.

AUGUST 23

We are always asking. We ask for truth with every inquiring thought. We ask for our daily bread by the industry of our hands. We ask for human friendship with our very eyes. And as life grows more real and deep, we ask for nobler kinds of good; for clearer minds and purer hearts, for the wisdom which is profitable to direct; for deliverance from inherited imperfections and personal selfishness; for larger powers and wider opportunities of service; for the insights of truth and beauty. And some-

times we dare to ask for more intimate communion with the Perfect Spirit in Nature, in humanity, and in our own souls.

AUGUST 24

Out of genuine faith in God comes faith in humanity, faith in one's self, faith in the whole order of the world.

AUGUST 25

Manlikeness means the courageous acceptance of earthly relations and mortal conditions of labor, trial, and pain. Godlikeness means rising above all these by inward spiritual force into serene purity and holy calm.

AUGUST 26

God and Man! Not God away up there in the glory, and Man down here in the dust, but God and Man here and together. Not God

watching his weak, erring, struggling creatures with an awful eye of suspicion and severity, but God in the beating of our hearts, the fountain of our being, the light of all our seeing. The Divine in the Human—Immanuel—God-with-us. This is the Christian interpretation of all life, and especially of ours. Not a lily grows, not a sparrow falls, without our Father; and He who cares for the grass of the field and the birds of the air, how much more must He care for His children! To teach mankind that they *are* His children, and to encourage their aspiration to be worthy of so high a rank by becoming like their Father in kind and quality—this is the gospel of Jesus.



AUGUST 27

“Psychology,” or the science of spirit; “Altruism,” or respect for each other, and “Sociology,” or the science of living together, are among the great words of our time. They show that man is becoming interesting to himself, that he is no longer willing to postpone his salvation to the world beyond death, and that he is full of expect-

tations for the life that now is. He has little use for a religion that tries to reconcile him to his own misery or which makes him indifferent to that of his brethren. The new creed affirms stoutly that "none should patiently endure any ill that can be cured."



AUGUST 28

It is too much to pretend that anybody has fathomed the purport for which this world exists, or that the Author of it has shown to any mortal the programme of its history; or that He has lifted the curtain upon the counsels of eternal wisdom and power. But do not ask me to believe that our clearest insights and our highest aspirations are mockeries. Many a man has felt in his own heart and in his highest moods that the best must be the truest; that his own nature is best suited to truth and goodness, as his eye is suited to the light. In passing from infancy to maturity, he becomes aware that he has only taken a few steps on an upward leading path which, like Jacob's ladder, seems to lose itself in the heights of an upper glory. The more he learns from

observation and history, the more fully is he persuaded that the human race to which he belongs is capable of climbing that shining way, that nothing is too good to be true, and that nothing is too high to be reached.

AUGUST 29

Man has been trying to express himself and the world while not able to understand either; and the whole process is one of gradual education and development. His cries, gestures, words, symbols, myths, sciences, — they are all feelings and fumbings after reality. He has found reality only in part; he can only report progress and ask leave to sit again.

AUGUST 30

It is reasonable to believe in the existence of the invisible and the unseen; but it is not reasonable to pretend we understand any facts beyond the present range and gauge of our faculties.

We must not deny the mysteries, but we must let them remain mysteries till we have more light and clearer vision. Who can measure the contents and forces of the world, of humanity, of God? Yet who would not gladly know more and more of everything in the universe which he inhabits?



August 31

Nature is a sacred scripture, at once the most ancient and the most modern; a simple primer of easy lessons for the child, an exhaustless study for the philosopher, yet an arcanum of insoluble problems, whose factors are eternity and infinity.

September

SEPTEMBER 1 SELFISHNESS AND SELF-LOVE

LET us distinguish between selfishness and self-love. Self-love is good and necessary ; it makes a man value his own being, keep himself from harm, care for what belongs to him, use his opportunities, provide for his own welfare. He may do all this with perfect regard for justice and good will. He must either take care of himself, or be taken care of by others, or perish. Self-love thus saves him from being a burden. But selfishness is self-love carried to that excess which makes one blind to the rights of others and willing to inflict injury upon them to his own supposed advantage.



SEPTEMBER 2

The true kingdom means self-justice, as well as justice to the neighbor. Self-fidelity is not

another name for selfishness. Indeed, we serve others best by living largely, freely, wisely, — by simply being luminous and shining.

SEPTEMBER 3

Self-love, rightly taken, is a moral necessity. A man has the best of reasons for valuing the being God has given him; he has no right to throw himself away, nor to impair or waste his powers, nor to reject or neglect the means of his own safety and welfare. Self-love, in its present form, enables the man to take and hold his proper rank in creation. Love of self may, therefore, be one form of love of God, which Channing identifies with love of good. And self-love is the foundation and fair measure of love to others, who are simply other such selves — our doubles. How can I love my neighbor as myself, unless I first love myself?

But selfishness is that perversion of self-love which shuts the neighbor from view, which blinds a man to another's equal rights and equal sacredness, and thus makes him weak for helping, strong

for hurting. Selfishness obstructs the circulation of benefit by arresting the outflow, which also checks the inflow; for no man gets the true good of anything whatever by trying to monopolize it.

SEPTEMBER 4

Any private practice which is unkind, any law or custom which is unjust, any prevailing opinion which is unreasonable, any combination which seeks advantage for a part of the people to the injury of another part, is a cause of disorder and operates just like a crime.

SEPTEMBER 5

Whatever comes to pass, whether we call it good or evil, takes its place in a large system of order. But human ignorance and selfishness are among the agencies of the over-ruling, all-including Providence. The blunders and suffering of good men, the outrage and violence of bad men, the thirst for gold, the greed of con-

quest, the restlessness of the populations, all work out the education of our slowly developing race.

SEPTEMBER 6

LABOR

I do not speak in the interests of Labor nor in the interests of Capital. They have no interests; man alone has interests, and both Labor and Capital must be his servants.

SEPTEMBER 7

We do not mend matters much by declamation about the dignity of labor; it is the dignity of the laborer that needs looking after. Respect for the bodies of men must become a part of our faith in the God who made them, and we must convert *labor*, which carries with it a notion of drudgery, into *work*, which is the wise and honorable exercise of power, always cheered by its outlook toward a worthy end.

SEPTEMBER 8

To an unperturbed mind and heart, the earth is sweet; and it is a pure pleasure to have a part in handling, improving, and using this whole stock of things we call our inheritance, — the materials by which we are fed and clothed, sheltered and served: the grains and fruits, the leather and wool, the cotton and silk, the wood and iron, the silver and gold. And when we operate on these materials through the useful and fine arts, when we mix mind and matter so as to create new forms and combinations for use and beauty, both life and the world grow rich and full of interest.

**SEPTEMBER 9**

We want a new kind of union, — a union not of working men to fight capital, nor a union of capitalists or employers to fight labor; but a union of all classes for the welfare of all. This is the supreme need of the times and the only remedy for social injustice and discontent. Either we must come to this or go on from

bad to worse. The form or method of such union is a secondary matter. When once men's hearts are turned toward each other in the spirit of brotherhood, all the rest will follow; for will makes the way.



SEPTEMBER 10

PROPERTY

Always we must bear in mind that there is but one Christian motive — that is, but one reasonable motive — for having any amount of property, large or small, namely, that it may be used in one way or another for the promotion of welfare; it may be the owner's welfare, it may be his neighbor's, it may be the community's. If the owner uses it for himself, he must use it unselfishly. For he must not think of himself as wholly his own; he belongs, with all he has, to the large human world, which is also a world of spirits. Property-holding, by the law of Nature, which is the law of Christ, is a spiritual function as truly as thought and love, and thought and love are involved in our use of things as much as in prayer. Indeed, the right

use of things is one form of prayer and worship.

SEPTEMBER 11

There is no moral objection to our living in comfort; but there may be some objection to our living at all unless we live in conformity with the laws of this universe. And one of these laws is that no man shall live to himself; that no man shall secede and set up a world of his own apart from his fellows. There is no moral objection to worldly prosperity; but we must never be willing to prosper alone, nor at the expense of other people.

SEPTEMBER 12

The true relation of man to property is *dominion for the sake of use*. It represents his mastery of the earth, the supremacy of mind over matter.

SEPTEMBER 13

A few plain principles will guide us. We must live and let live; and where there is need, we must help live. We must do justly and love mercy. We must count honest poverty better than dishonest wealth. We must keep the dollar under and the man on top. We must compel property to serve humanity. We must let alone what does not belong to us. We must remember that nothing belongs to us except for worthy uses, and then only for a little while.



SEPTEMBER 14

Our real possessions are confined to the things we use, or the things which have some actual relation with our life.



SEPTEMBER 15

Property serves a twofold purpose, because it has a twofold relation; to the holder and to

other men. As the holder is related to other men, so are his possessions, which are an extension of himself.

SEPTEMBER 16

The real wealth of a country is in its people. What is it that gives value to land? It is the presence of men, women, and children. . . .

No matter how large a man's possessions, their value depends on the quality of the human life around him.

SEPTEMBER 17

The more you have the richer I feel, and I am obliged to you for taking care of our property. He is poor indeed who has no sense of this joint-proprietorship and who cannot be glad in the common wealth. Pitiful is the poverty of spirit that cannot appropriate beauty except through a bill of sale.

SEPTEMBER 18

POVERTY

Every human being is poor who lacks the motive and trained faculties of self-help and common sense.

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SEPTEMBER 19

Nothing is more important than to keep up the tone of hopefulness and resolute bearing. No man must be made to feel that poverty makes him less a man; if he meets it bravely, it may make him more a man. No outward conditions are ignoble. Nothing is ignoble but cowardice, sloth, ill-will, and personal degradation.

-o-

SEPTEMBER 20

SOCIALISM

The highest welfare of all mankind requires the co-operation of all mankind.

It is one thing to admit the claims of the Golden Rule; it is quite another to apply it to our public and private affairs.

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SEPTEMBER 21

You will see why I cannot yield everything to those who regard the solution of social problems as the only business of modern life. These problems are large and vital, and I cannot neglect them. They claim a place in my course of religious instruction, which aims to bring the kingdom of heaven on earth. But we cannot study them merely as economists or as socialists; we must study them as men of the Spirit, as children of the Highest, and in the light that shines only in eyes that look upward. Our ethical culture must broaden into total culture; our love of freedom and humanity must be deepened and sweetened with the love of the Infinitely Perfect.

SEPTEMBER 22

We have had grand dreams of what society might be under a general reign of wisdom and love, with all men enlightened and virtuous. Where did we get this glorious ideal? It is a growth of the ages. It is a vision which has

cheered the minds of righteous men for uncounted centuries.

Now, it is our work to make it real. This is why thousands of people cannot rest till right is in the place of wrong; till reason rules the nations, instead of brute force; till the prosperous and well-to-do learn to treat the less fortunate as brothers; till employers and employed find a way of harmonizing their interests; till the relations of men and women are exalted and ennobled, to the infinite enrichment and gladness of both; till every child that is born has fair access to every form of benefit the earth can offer; till the disorder, disease, and ugliness of the city give way to cleanliness, health, and beauty.

SEPTEMBER 23

The dream of the socialists may never come true; but that dream itself stands for a great longing of human hearts,—the longing that we may all dwell together in a single household, and not a single child be left outside the circle of love and of the rich provision of helpfulness.

SEPTEMBER 24

In trying to improve or reform the present social order, we must take care not to weaken the individual or impair his right of initiation. Personal liberty has cost too much to be given up, even as the price of escape from its own abuses. We must have union as well as liberty, but we must not give up liberty for the sake of union.




SEPTEMBER 25

There is to be no peace — thank God! there can be no peace — until this vast, struggling procession of the people has passed up to higher levels; no peace till the least of these, our burden-bearing brethren, find a welcome at the common table; no peace till the unclean spirits of caste, greed, and sottishness are cast out, and men learn to dwell together on all the earth as one family.




SEPTEMBER 26

The ideal aim is to place all benefits and all best things within reach of all sorts and conditions of people; so that, if any fail, it shall be through their own disability or neglect, and not because others have robbed them of fair and equal opportunities.



SEPTEMBER 27

The prayer for daily bread is a prayer for wisdom and strength to procure it; it is also a prayer for the prevalence of good manners at this bounteous table of Providence, so that there may be no crowding or snatching. Thus at every turn we are obliged to consider the moral conditions of society and the imperative need of social justice and good will. The supply and the invitation are meant for all; the resources of Nature are ample; man's capacity for industry and invention is ample; and all mankind will have enough when all mankind become willing to take a fair share in both production and use.



SEPTEMBER 28

The dangerous classes are at the extremes of society; and it is a case where the extremes often meet and make common cause against public welfare. But when these different forms of selfishness coalesce or collide, they are alike injurious and anarchistic. The danger is not in wealth nor poverty so much as in the lack of justice, brotherhood, and public spirit.

SEPTEMBER 29

Whoever lives in society and yet acts without regard to society is a dangerous man. Here is crime in essence, crime in the making. All crime springs from selfishness.

SEPTEMBER 30

Because he finds nothing perfect, the anarchist wants to destroy everything. Because he finds nothing perfect, the sensible man wants to improve everything.

October

OCTOBER 1 SERVICE — SERVING THE TIME

LET us take this home to our hearts: Our best thoughts and noblest feelings — which come like whispers from God to our souls in calm and serious moments — are not our private property; they are meant for publication. Not, perhaps, in printed or spoken words, but in the life we live among our kind. To grow wiser, richer, and more exalted in our own being is a privilege ten-thousandfold more to be prized because it empowers us to become the benefactor of all whose lives are mingled with our own.

OCTOBER 2

We can serve our time and all times by practising and promoting a religion which is rational as well as reverent, humane as well as divine, free as well as fraternal, and progressive as well

as stable,— a religion which makes roots in the hidden life of the soul, while it bears fruits in the activities of the world.

**OCTOBER 3**

We are best fitted to serve the present age, and to live intensely in it, by living also above it; by seeing it as one golden moment in God's eternity and ours. We can afford to have our heads, hearts, and hands full of this world's affairs only when we can come to them each day as winged creatures who can ascend and descend at pleasure, and who have no other care but to learn and to do their earthly errand. We shall make sure of the best things the age has to offer, and at the same time be best protected against its disorders, distractions, and dangers, by simply standing in our proper place, throwing our own life into the common lot, joining hands with all that work for good, keeping our garments clean, and facing all men and events without fear, and in "the spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind."

OCTOBER 4

Some serve the age by helping to think out its problems; others by working to right its wrongs; others by simply living wisely, worthily, and well. Great thinkers and strong men of action are few; we count them our benefactors. Their words and works survive them and set themselves to music; they are inspirers and towers of strength for all generations. . . . But the age is also served by all who live wisely, worthily, and well. These serve like stars, or like the humble lamps of the street, — by simply shining.

OCTOBER 5

A Christian apostle called himself a "worker with God." Why should not every man, who follows an honest and useful calling, say that? To put a seed in the earth, where God's sun and rain may make it grow; to convert natural beauties to human uses; to employ gravity, water, fire, electricity, chemistry in carrying burdens and bringing benefits, — is this not also to be a worker with God? To effect a use-

ful exchange, to order a home, to teach a child, to cheer a sad life, to utter a truth,— is not this a sacred ministry? And the same thing holds of all our lowliest tasks and social services.

OCTOBER 6

Persons are our opportunities; and even the richest and most favored are in need of sunshine and sympathy. Situations are our opportunities; every act and word which suits the occasion helps to bring the kingdom nearer.

OCTOBER 7

We should be equally glad to do service and to accept service; to give out sunshine and to absorb it.

OCTOBER 8

If we thought of these matters aright, how could any ministry of angels seem more sacred than the common services of domestic life?

OCTOBER 9

Whether it be a day's work, a sermon, or a song, we owe it to somebody. Even a silent meditation in solitude may fit us for some truer service.

OCTOBER 10

Might we not serve the time by setting a brave example of simplicity, sincerity, and serenity?

OCTOBER 11

One need not strain himself to be useful; he cannot help being useful if he is cheerful and brave, if he is bright and true, if he is clean and honest.

OCTOBER 12

COLUMBUS (*America*)

Now that the whole round world is known and open to human occupancy and use, the spirit of discovery must take a new direction. It must

follow intellectual, scientific, and moral lines; it must busy itself with the search for qualities; we must explore the paths that lead to higher welfare. The true America is still to seek, and whoever will follow that quest will have need of all the stout-heartedness, the persistency of will, the devout enterprise, and the unfailing confidence in a Higher Guidance which are forever associated with the name of Columbus.

OCTOBER 13

America is not yet discovered, save in part. We have found the land and measured its area; we know its mountains and plains, its watersheds and basins; we have traced its coast-lines and made charts of its climate. But how little we know of its real resources! How superficially we judge of its human possibilities and of the grand institutions and noble people it can produce! All we have done up to date is to grade a spot for the building and collect a part of the material; the real Temple of Liberty is yet to be built.

OCTOBER 14

When a man hears the still, small voice in his soul, calling him to any new departure, how can he ever know what vast consequences to himself and others may hang on his fidelity?



OCTOBER 15

The sound knowledge of one man outweighs the ignorance and prejudice of millions, and his courageous fidelity to truth at last brings the world around.



OCTOBER 16

There is something quite awful in the power of a thought when a man dwells on it long enough to let it take full possession of his mind and brain; it rules him with the despotism of fate. If to the thought is added the heat of passion, it fuses his whole being and recasts it into its own image. He becomes that thought embodied and is its living representation in the human

world. If the thought is true and noble, it makes him a true and noble man and a power for good. He may be one-sided and fanatical, but his fanaticism often makes havoc in the devil's kingdom. If the thought be false and evil, then the man becomes a corrupter and destroyer. But this method makes men masterful, whether for good or evil.

OCTOBER 17

The hope which reaches out to lay hold on reality is itself a reality, and it feeds, stimulates, and supports every faculty; it puts a man up to doing his best; it sends the mind forth, like Columbus, to find and possess new worlds. He who can inspire us with the highest ideals and the most audacious hopes is our greatest benefactor; for these are dreams which tend to their own fulfillment; and the good thing we seek is simply the divinely prepared response to our awakened sense of need.

OCTOBER 18

LIFE

Consecration is concentration.



OCTOBER 19

A man should not *lose* his temper; he may need it. But how brave it is to preserve a calm demeanor when a storm is rising in one's bosom! To cheer one's friends with a smiling countenance when the heart is heavy! To meet with courtesy and treat with patience the visitor who comes at the wrong time or on an unwelcome errand! This is not hypocrisy; it is self-conquest; and it is merely paying our debts, for we owe good will and good manners to every one we meet.



OCTOBER 20

Do we dread to grow old? Then let us change our method, or our mental attitude, and consider how we may grow young, by nourishing within ourselves that which is eternal. God never grows old; why should His child? Truth and love never grow old; and truth and love are the form-

ative forces which can build up that heavenly form of life which Paul calls a celestial body.

OCTOBER 21

No man comes to full possession and use of his faculties except through living in sympathy and fellowship with mankind, past and present.

OCTOBER 22

Self-possession is not self-creation; it is the full acceptance of the unspeakable gift of personality.

OCTOBER 23

There is a public quality in all private virtue.
Duties are ours — results are in other keeping.

OCTOBER 24

The way to escape from trials and troubles is to go into and among them — and then rise above them.

OCTOBER 25

What the man calls his business is after all a secondary affair; his greater and only real business is to live.

OCTOBER 26

Both in learning and doing we must preserve our peace of mind, our composure. How much power we allow to be frittered away by inward disturbances! There is need to say this, because we live in a period of many excitements and distractions. Under such conditions, our safety and soundness must depend on frequent withdrawal, "gathering into inward silence" and giving our minds a chance to settle. The quiet pool gives back the picture of the sky; but when the water is agitated every image is broken.

OCTOBER 27

I think also this inward steadiness would secure constancy and richness to our human affections. How much more of fine benefit and

sweet satisfaction we might have in each other, and in the companionship of every day, if we could bring into our relations a nobler spirit and that serenity of temper which belongs to inward repose! Why can we not learn to mix the best products of solitude with the best uses of society?

OCTOBER 28

To live better we must live more largely; to reach better results we must work on broader plans. It is mainly a question of spirit.

We must do many little things, but we need not do any petty things. We may not accomplish *much*, but the quality of our work may give it greatness.

OCTOBER 29

As sure as Nature and the soul have one Author, so sure must it be that the things seen are images or correspondences of things unseen, and that heavenly meanings are wrapped up in earthly symbols.

OCTOBER 30

One is sometimes asked, "How do you enjoy *yourself*?" I think it a most searching question — a question like the day of judgment. What sort of company do we keep when we are alone?

OCTOBER 31

I am trying to teach the great lesson of self-respect or self-preservation. If a man wishes to be somebody, can he do any better than to be himself? Let him stand quietly, yet stoutly, for this proprietorship. He does not gain or keep his own standing by pushing other people, but by letting the better spirit, the deep kingly reason, rule him, and have its way with him. Let him become a solid, positive quantity, and the place or part which belongs to him in creation will be forever secure.

November

NOVEMBER 1

POLITICS

TO deal with changing situations we must adhere to unchanging principles.

The wisest leading comes to nothing without wise following.

NOVEMBER 2

There are two points on which we need to fix our attention: First, that principles do not change; second, that the conditions to which these principles must be applied are forever changing. What, then, is our real business? First, to live in the principles; next, to act according to the situation. Then the principles will represent the highest fact of the universe, the divine order; and in applying these principles we shall help to bring the world around us into harmony with that order.

NOVEMBER 3

When the leaders of great popular movements are broad-minded, clear-sighted, and just, humanity draws deep, full breaths, and takes long strides forward. But our American life is like a great public meeting in which everybody talks at once; and even if we try to listen, the confusion must cheat us of a good understanding and make it difficult to distinguish between wise men and fools. All the more necessary is it that we should sometimes withdraw into the silence and do our own thinking by the help of voices that penetrate the more deeply because they speak from the calm to the calm.

**NOVEMBER 4**

By a swift and mighty act of incorporation, which must be a creative fiat, all the kindreds of the earth are being made members of one body. We are all obliged to share the common lot and bear each other's burdens, so fulfilling the law of Christ. For if one member suffers, — be it in England, France, Armenia, Africa, South Amer-

ica, Cuba, or some lone island of the sea,—all the members must in some way suffer with it; or if one rejoices, all the others may rejoice with it. It is not too much to hope that our country may yet produce a race of statesmen who will study the principles of fair exchange, mutual benefit, and universal prosperity, instead of contriving how we may feed fat by starving other nations. Is America still to move in the forefront of the international procession, or to fall behind?

NOVEMBER 5

This is clear to me, and this I must be free to say: Unless we cease to make party supremacy the main issue, and unless we learn to decide local, national, and international questions on grounds of reason and righteousness, the republic will drop to a lower order, the costly heritage of impartial liberty and impartial law will be lost to our children, and the blood of martyred patriots will have been shed in vain.

NOVEMBER 6

The call of the time is not to a narrow and intense individualism, which works for selfish private interest or culture; nor to a close socialistic organization, which would sacrifice liberty to union; but for that true democracy, — which is also a true theocracy, — a government of the people which is at the same time the government of God.

NOVEMBER 7

Nothing can help our city and our country so much as shining lives, — lives of simple honesty and faithfulness and good cheer, — lives of men and women who will not lie nor play the coward, who will render to all their dues, who have clear sight to see the right and firm will to maintain it and make it the common law.

NOVEMBER 8

We can never get on prosperously without the restraining, regulating, and educative help of institutions.

NOVEMBER 9

Institutions serve three purposes: they restrain, regulate, and educate. They place whole populations under discipline. They bring the needed element of order into our personal and collective life, and they are to our social activities what the streets are to the city—they permit freedom of movement and the transaction of a vast volume of business.


NOVEMBER 10

What a changed world would this be if the law of love could have free course and become supreme! It would silence the clamor of passion; it would bring social harmonies in place of antagonisms, joyous co-operation in the place of our exhausting competition, exchange of service in place of conflicting interests, general good will in place of suspicion and hatred. Instead of a world full of jarring, shattering discords, we should have a real concert, a vast human symphony.

NOVEMBER 11

SYMPATHY


It is by this divine sympathy that truth itself is made effective; for sympathy in the world of souls, which we all inhabit, is like the universal ether which gives wings to the light of sun and stars. Sympathy is love on its travels—love opening communication between spirit and spirit; love going out to service; love descending from God to man; love ascending from man to God; love weaving ties between man and man, and between man and Nature; love as the circulating life of the universe.



NOVEMBER 12


WISDOM OF THE HEART

If a man will commune with his own heart,—if he will look long enough, deep enough, often enough,—he will find there a mirror of all things, all truths, all laws.




NOVEMBER 13

Wisdom comes not alone of intellectual training; it comes of the heart's loyalty to reality and to principle.

**NOVEMBER 14**

There must be an affinity between the wise heart and all truth; between the pure heart and all purity; between the loving heart and the supreme Heart of Love; between the guileless heart and the holy perfection of God.

About dogmas, or doctrinal forms, we may honestly and usefully differ; the same words may carry meanings to those who really think alike. But the wisdom of the heart is one thing to all men, as light is one thing to all eyes, and air to all lungs, and health to all bodies.

**NOVEMBER 15** **LOVE TO THE NEIGHBOR**

This is the law and the prophets: To love the Best with all the heart, and to love our neighbor as equally entitled to the Best and as equally

entitled to all the means and paths that lead in that direction.

NOVEMBER 16

Brotherhood, inspired by faith in the Fatherhood and by respect for humanity under all its depressions and disguises; Brotherhood,— that alone will make the world beautiful; that alone will be the triumph of Christ and his gospel. By that alone must our laws and our customs, our character and our religion, be judged and approved, or weighed and found wanting.

The good time coming must wait for the dying of international hatreds, race antagonisms, and contempt of classes for each other. It must wait for the fraternization of nations and the enthronement of *Love in Light* as the reigning religion. It must wait for the disbandment of great armies —

“Till the war-drum throbs no longer, and the battle-flags are furled
In the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World.”

But *we* need not wait — we whose religion is built on the two great commandments of Love

to God and Love to the Neighbor. We need not wait—we who are disciples of the great preacher who knew himself both Son of man and Son of God and who claimed the same honor and blessing for all his brethren.

NOVEMBER 17

When we say, "God bless you!" let it mean, "I will bless you!" When we say, "Good morning!" let it mean, "I will help to make it good."

NOVEMBER 18

FRIENDSHIP

If the truest friendship calls for the possession of the best qualities and the activity of the higher qualities,—if it includes an exchange of recognitions and services between those who love each other because they also love the True, the Beautiful, and the Good,—then we need the same standard of "divine affection's bond," the same purity and reasonableness, in our intercourse with the living as when we would commune

in thought with those disembodied ones who "haunt the silence of the breast." Whatever signals may be possible or fancied between this state of being and the invisible realm of the departed, we know that *all friendship is in the nature of spirit-intercourse*, and that angelic life can live and thrive only upon angelic food. "Shall we know each other there?" Ah, would to God we could know each other here! And to know each other, here or there, we must be our best.

**NOVEMBER 19**

True friendship is a religious experience—a holy sacrament. It is a refining and enrichment of mind and heart, and a preparation for larger living and wider relations with spiritual beings. Yes; that is the central thing: we are to meet as pure spirits; and this should be a kind of apprenticeship for heaven. To know and trust and love one human being ought to help us to such a way of thinking and feeling as would lead up to pure universal fellowships. We shall know when our relations with each other are

orderly and pure by this test; they will help us toward the perfect God.

NOVEMBER 20

FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship is like love and friendship—it goes itself. It is a thing of the spirit, a stirring of that subtle wind which bloweth where it listeth; a force which can be invoked, but not commanded.

NOVEMBER 21

MAGNANIMITY

Our real need is for magnanimity, that largeness of spirit which makes room for broad views and common interests. Magnanimity also implies a certain forceful generosity which emancipates us from petty self-regard, from prickly personalities, and from our likes and dislikes, so that we can accept men and institutions for what they are, quite independent of their effect on us and on our little affairs. Thus we should get the help of the judgment of other men without being ruled or too much swayed by it.

NOVEMBER 22

LOVE

Love covers all faults; hatred hides all virtues.

Man is here that he may learn to obey intelligently and from love.



NOVEMBER 23

Love is fusion — the blending in unity of two or of ten or of a thousand millions. It is the escape from selfishness into common and larger interests, it is delight in the general welfare and happiness; it is a share of the spirit of Him who is good to all and whose tender mercies are over all His works. The growth of love is promoted, therefore, by whatever helps us realize the unity of creation with the Creator and the unity of the creatures with each other.



NOVEMBER 24

Any object which we know and love becomes ours simply by knowing and loving it. To know

and love is to appreciate, and to appreciate is to appropriate. Nothing which we do not appreciate is a real possession.



NOVEMBER 25

THANKSGIVING

With all our causes for thanksgiving, who dares to say that we have attained the national ideal; that our body politic is in full health and vigor; that the Republic holds no anti-republican elements; that the people of this land are living together as members of one body — as a happy, holy, prosperous family? We have seen what an aroused public feeling can do to save us in time of war; we have seen what even a partly torpid public feeling can do for us in time of peace. We have yet to realize its full power and beneficence as a law of every-day life in all affairs and among all classes.



NOVEMBER 26

Before forgetting the things which are behind, let us pay our respects to them; let us ask their

counsel, welcome their admonition, and give thanks for their encouragement. Have we not received benefits which make it easy to expect more? Have we not committed mistakes which ought not to be repeated? Have we not made discoveries which may help us to understand ourselves, our human companions, the world we live in and the laws we live under?

NOVEMBER 27

Three hopeful signs of the times: The growth of a more just and kindly temper; the urgency for a diffusion of benefits; the deepening sense of a spiritual life, a life rooted in spiritual realities, but bearing fruit in practical righteousness.

NOVEMBER 28

Our highest welfare, both spiritual and physical, is made to depend on our acceptance and use of the blessings within our reach.

NOVEMBER 29**EVIL FORCES**

I think there are no evil forces. But the forces that are good in themselves are sure to produce what we call evil whenever they operate under certain conditions. Gravitation will pull down a weakly constructed building. The sun will dry up and burn to death a plant set in too shallow soil. Electricity will leave a wire and rend the body of the man who touches it with a careless hand. But we do not count gravitation, sunlight, electricity, as evil forces.

It is the same in the realm of mind and morals. If a man argues from a false premise, reason itself will force him to a mistaken conclusion. If parents are lacking in judgment, their love will prompt them to courses that injure their children. But we do not count reason and love as powers of evil.

**NOVEMBER 30****HUMANENESS**

We are not yet humane because not yet wholly human.

December

DECEMBER 1**GOD**

“I AM God Almighty! Walk before me.” He who hears this voice knows that he is not his own; knows that he cannot give life to himself; knows that he is never alone; knows that he lives and moves and has his being inside of a larger and all-including Life; knows that a sacred influence pours around him and streams through him as real as the sun’s light and heat and the currents of magnetic force; knows, in short, that he is a living spirit, dwelling in a realm of spirit and ever subject to spiritual laws, authorized to depend on spiritual resources and capable of a spiritual destiny.

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DECEMBER 2

The modern man needs something for the health and repose of his mind. He needs a

sense of secure relations with the universe and of harmony with the laws by which it is governed. He often feels the limits of his own wisdom, and he is not sure that he is in the keeping of a wisdom larger than his own. *He needs God.*

DECEMBER 3

The spirit of God is infallible, but man's reception of it is fallible.

Grant that there has been a perfect revelation, but you must also grant that there has been no perfect reception and understanding of it by mankind.

DECEMBER 4

The more we think about it, the clearer and surer it becomes that if we are ever to learn anything about the Supreme Spirit we must come at it not alone by looking at the earth and sky, not alone by studies of matter and force, but by looking also and chiefly at inward nature,

at the finest spiritual products and principles as they are exhibited in the noblest lives. Since no man hath seen or can see God directly, we must contemplate him in the characters which our reason tells us are most pure and exalted, and, therefore, most like Him. We cannot afford to miss this kind of help, for if we do not know wisdom and virtue as they appear in human form, we shall never see beyond.



DECEMBER 5

Without God, the world is a homesick place; our life becomes a mockery; and in the saddest sense we all seem to be dying of heart-failure. We need encouragement; that is, we need *enheartening*, strengthening at the center, and assurance of inward support. How can we get rid of these wretched misgivings till we are satisfied that our existence is backed up by an adequate power, and that our life-stream is supplied from an exhaustless fountain?



DECEMBER 6

Very little of the air around us vibrates in music. Yet it is enough to interpret the harmonies of the world. Very little of the glorious breadth of sunshine enters our eyes; yet it is enough to paint for us all the pictures of earth and sky. Very dim is our perception of truth; yet it is enough to kindle the assurance that there is a Mind to which all things lie open—that “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.” Very faint are the stirrings of pure and unselfish affections in our hearts; yet they are enough to help us understand the gospel message that “God is love, and he that loveth is born of God and knoweth God.” Very obscure is this spark of consciousness which illumines our being; yet it is enough to give us the sense of kinship with the all-perfect and eternal One. “I AM” is His name! And it is the family name; for each one of us can say “I am!” Very feeble within us is the response of our moral feeling to the awful authority which says, “Thou shalt” and “Thou shalt not”; yet it is enough to make us listen, awe-struck and hopeful, to the voice

which says, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."

DECEMBER 7

Oh, let us bravely believe that the wisdom which is in our minds and the love which is in our hearts are not merely human; they are signs of the real Presence.

DECEMBER 8

We are half ready to say, in our low moods, that if God is so good He might take better care of us; He might show Himself in Nature more plainly. But perhaps He keeps out of sight to give us all the better chance to take care of ourselves. Perhaps the true sign that He is with us as a very present help is in power given us to stand on our own feet, to use our own hands, to take the direction of our lives. So He never lets us see His face nor hear His voice nor feel the touch of His hands. Yet are there not some aspects of the world which look out on us like a

Face? Some impressions made on our minds like a Voice? Some great services done for us that are like generous giving from an outstretched Hand?

DECEMBER 9

There must be a sense in which it is not true that "all things are possible to him that believeth"; for no amount of faith or faithfulness has yet made it possible to break through the limits which are wisely imposed on all finite creatures. The blessed truth that God is with us and within us does not make us almighty, nor all-wise; but it does assure us of all needed help from One who is almighty and all-wise. And while the sense of our frailty should make us humble and watchful, the sense of His presence should make us trustful and glad.

DECEMBER 10

Is it reasonable, then, to doubt either His goodness or His power? Is it not reasonable

to believe that the unknown is always more than the known; that the unseen is always more than the seen; that, out of our sight and beyond our knowledge, and yet in the order of Nature and of the universe, there are vaster displays of power and glory? And, since the earth itself has been the scene of so many transformations and renewals, who shall say that evolution has reached its fullness? Why do we ourselves dream of a higher state for the human race? Why do we long and toil for it? What spirit is it that prompts us to pray that earth may become like heaven? Surely the Lord is with us, even when we know it not!

DECEMBER 11

All is of God. The conditions of our life, for better or worse; the tremendous sweep of heredity and the law of consequences; the play of human passions and the necessity of learning to govern them; the results of legitimate and illegitimate use of our powers and opportunities; the whole tragedy of sin and suffering, — all is

of God. He is Lord of life and death; of the heavens and the hells; of all realms and all souls. All is of God; and God is love. What men call His severity and His wrath are only the aspects which love itself presents to the unloving and disorderly, or to the unwise.

**DECEMBER 12**

We may fix on this: One clear ray which enters the eye is absolute proof of all it shows, though all mankind were blind and all the sky as black as midnight. Darkness cannot disprove light; no more can ignorance rule knowledge, or doubt weaken a living faith, backed by the experience of love. This clear perception that there is law, and right, and good, may help us to face all that seems wrong, and to look all the horrors out of countenance.

**DECEMBER 13**

“To glorify God” is a phrase which does not say to us just what it said to man of old time,

but we may safely take it for granted that the Creator is most honored by whatever is done in conformity with His laws; and that He is truly glorified by the reasonable conduct of His creatures, and by every such glad and grateful use of His blessings as makes them contribute to our real welfare.

DECEMBER 14

Every snowflake reveals the law of crystallization; every drop of water is a specimen of the ocean; every grain of sand is inscribed with the history of the globe; every heartbeat reports the mystery of life. So does the upward struggle of the soul, in its conflict with weakness, ignorance, and evil, enshrine in miniature the awful and glorious Power whose stately steppings are seen in history, and whose goings forth have been of old, even from everlasting.

DECEMBER 15

Always and everywhere, that creative energy which brooded and breathed over the formless

and empty world and poured from its own fullness the tide of life and beauty into all its creatures, still broods and breathes over our poor rich human hearts and works in us to enlighten, renew, and purify; works in us to will and to do. This inworking Spirit is the source of all we call our own; it throbs in our hearts; it is the life of our life; our aspirations are its aspirations. It is the fountain out of which flow all the streams that make creation glad. Christianity did not bring it to the world; it brought whatever is true and good that passes under the Christian name; it brought whatever is good and true in any religion and in any character. It is the creator of all useful institutions—the quickener of society, art, science, poetry, of invention and industry; it is God over all, in all, and through all.

DECEMBER 16

Though to my mind there is no sense in which God is three persons, any more than a sense in which he is three millions, yet we should greatly impoverish our idea of the all-perfect One were

we to leave out of thought that sovereign power and eternal justice which is called the Father; or that manifest word of love and light which is called the Son; or that reproving, inviting, instructing, sanctifying, and comforting presence which is called the Holy Spirit.

DECEMBER 17

Allow, as we must, that God's being is hidden in mystery. Nevertheless, He has shown us His nature a thousandfold more plainly than if we could see a Face looking down from the sky. Or if a curtain could be raised, and our eyes be dazzled and our hearts confounded by a sight of the Throne that is high and white, with that Awfulness seated thereon before which heaven and earth should flee away, could the overpowering vision serve us as well as the simple feeling which enables the child to say, "Our Father"?

DECEMBER 18

The one fact which we most certainly know is our own existence; and in that fact, if we look

deep enough and honestly enough, we shall find the revelation and witness of God. For when a man has really made acquaintance with his own reason, he has seen the Face; when he has rightly revered the decrees of conscience, he has heard the Voice.

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DECEMBER 19

God is perfect, but our vision of Him is dim. The law of right is perfect, but we imperfectly conform to it. Truth is perfect, but it is imperfectly known.

We need God that we may rightly value man; and we need heavenly principles that we may cultivate a noble worldly-mindedness.

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DECEMBER 20

If we grow anxious, and begin to ask, "How do we know that this mysterious power can be trusted?" the answer comes, "See! I offer all

the world to your intelligence and your affection, as a voucher of my competency and good faith toward my dependent creatures. It is my part to provide, it is your part to receive, to learn, to trust, to love and to obey, to grow and to enjoy."

DECEMBER 21

Back of our morality is our religion; back of our religion is our common humanity; back of morality, religion, and humanity is our share of the infinite Life, which is given to us to share and to impart.

DECEMBER 22

The unseen Cause of all things seen is surely able and willing to do more and greater and better things than we know how to ask or think. Can God make and fit up and furnish a world like this? He has done it. Can He people it with all forms of life, and bring them forward on an ever-ascending scale of excellence? He


has done it. Can He bring forth food for all the creatures from the thin air and the dull clod? He has done it. Can He fashion these mortal frames of ours and so fill them with His breath that we know ourselves as living souls? He has done it. Can He take hold of our infant hands and lead us safely up the slope to manhood and to womanhood? He has done it. Can He beckon us toward perfection and toward Himself, by holding out before us and above us bright ideals which waken our longings and our hopes? Yes, all these things He has done and is doing; and in doing them He evermore makes all things new. And never was He busier than now.

DECEMBER 23

I am obliged to believe that the unknown First Cause, which produces all creatures, is alive, else it could not give life; that it is good, else it *would* not give life; and that it knows what it is about, else how could it impart intelligence?

DECEMBER 24


Day by day, as you trifle away the golden hours,—night by night, as the pomp of stars moves above your troubled slumbers,—the kindly Eye watches, the holy Voice whispers, the loving Hand beckons, the Father waits to impart the spirit of sonship and to lead you to the true home of the soul.



DECEMBER 25

CHRISTMAS

This is the Christmas feeling: Give life to love. Let your light shine. Do something for somebody. Give the cup of cold water; feed the hungry; clothe the naked; care for the sick and the prisoner; be among mankind as one who serveth; bear witness to the truth at every cost; destroy the works of the devil; put a right in the place of every wrong.



DECEMBER 26

Our Christmas lesson amounts to this: We can all be our best; we can make sure that none

shall have cause to be sorry that we were born; and, by patient continuance in well-doing, we may be sure our weak little cries will swell the song which is yet to resound through the earth as through heaven, "Glory to God and good will to men!"


DECEMBER 27

THE EARTHLY LIFE

The earthly life of man, with all its conditions and appointments, I believe to have a spiritual aim and end; I believe we can rescue it from degradation and profanation by lifting it out of secularity and holding it up to the light of that true ideal which is the light of heaven. Little as we know, little as we can know, of the best order of the universe, or even of our own existence, I am sure we can discover a sacred meaning in our present life—a meaning which will command our respect and reverence as something worthy of the wisdom and love from which the world proceeds, and to which we owe our place and rank in creation.


DECEMBER 28

To live in the world as a well-ordered home means business; it means wakeful intelligence, applied power, invention, industry, economy, self-control, good will, and co-operation. But to learn all this takes time and experience—takes also the cumulative wisdom of generations.



DECEMBER 29

Did you never wish to live your life over again and to do it with all your present knowledge? In the highest sense, this very thing is possible for us all. Do we not really begin each day with the stored-up benefit of all the days we have lived? 'Tis true, we do not always profit by our past experience; but if we would take it right, our life would be a perpetual new departure—a continuous youth—a childhood with grown-up advantages.



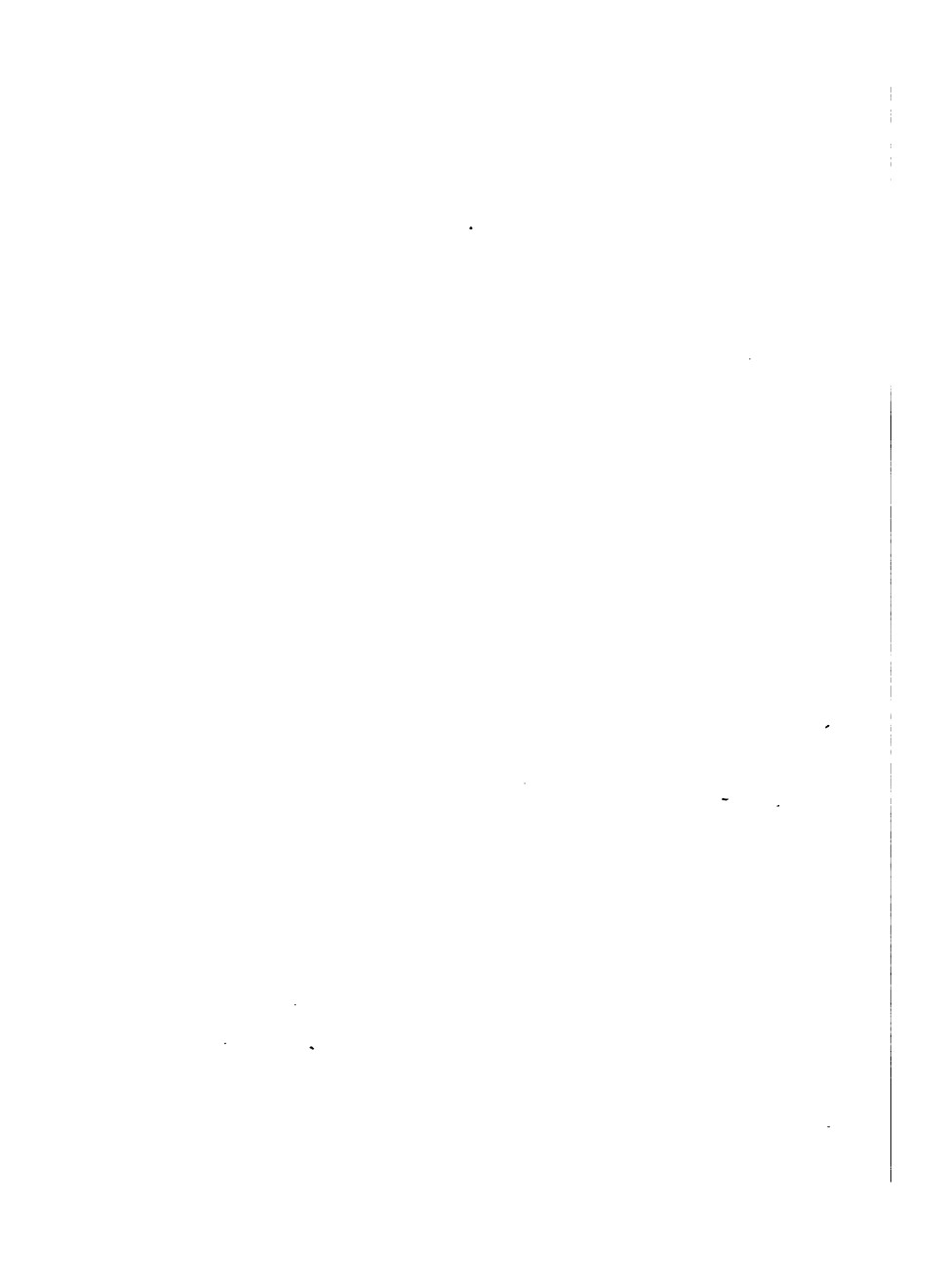
DECEMBER 30

Profit by the world's experience; keep what has been gotten aforesaid; get what the new time offers; transmit to the after-time.

**DECEMBER 31**

Let us not shrink from a wholesome self-questioning. As the years go by, does life acquire deeper meaning and higher value? Do we care more for good things, and most for the best? Are we more ready to take a hint of improvement, more open to the reproofs of truth, more sensitive to the distinctions of right and wrong? Have we been growing more reasonable, calm, self-possessed; more amenable to discipline, and so more skillful in the worthy use of our faculties? Does Nature seem more and say more to us because our eyes have opened to its pictures, our ears to its music, our hearts to its wonders? And this world in which we live and move and have our being,—has it schooled us to a better understanding of what it is to be just

and kind, pure and true, helpful and glad? Have we grown stronger to resist evil example, and yet more tender in our compassion toward human frailty and folly? Have we been drawing closer in fellowship to all good people, and more willing to do our part in all good work? If we can say Yes to such questions, let us thank God, who has helped us so to number our days as to learn from them the wisdom of the heavens.





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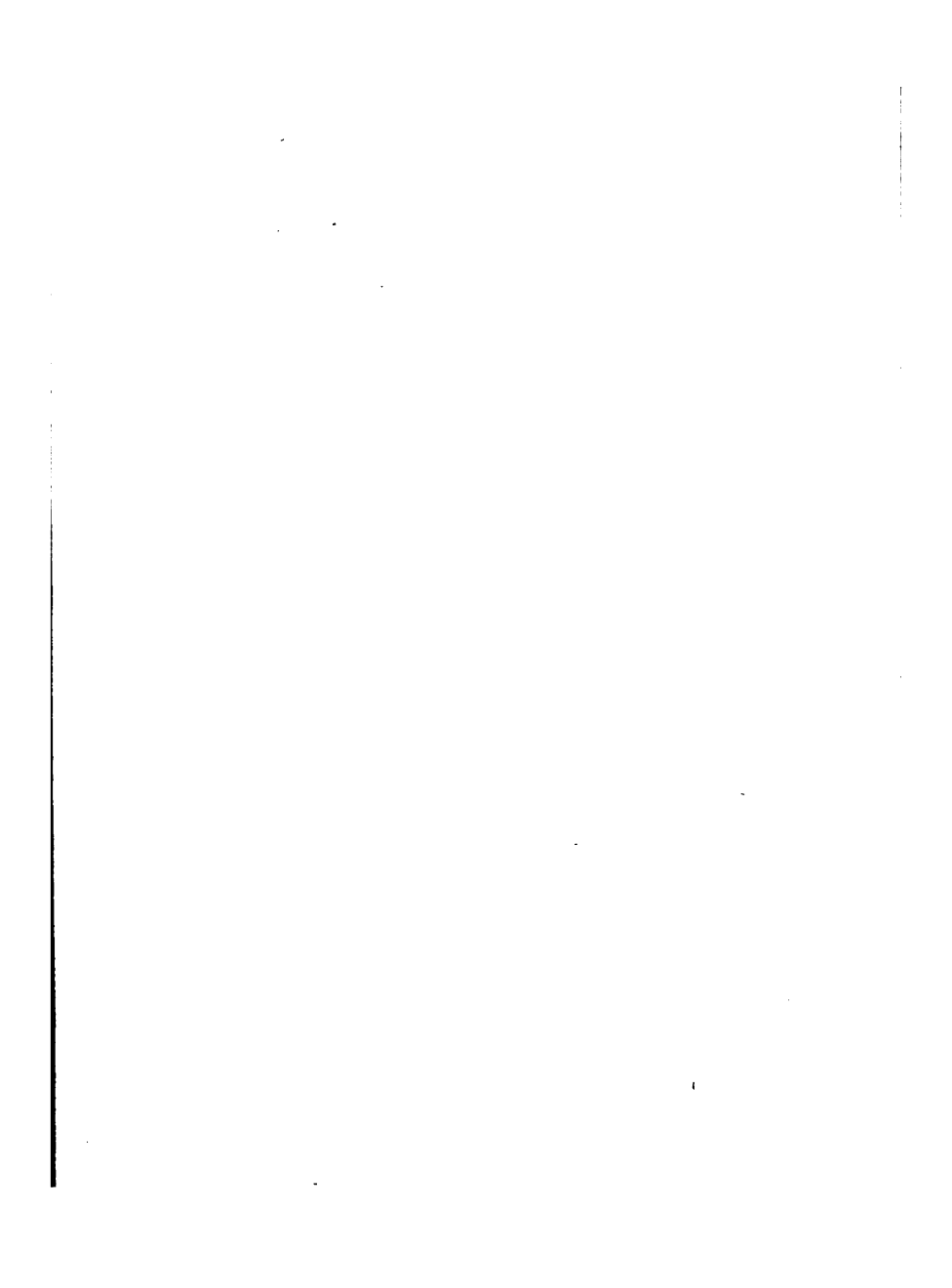
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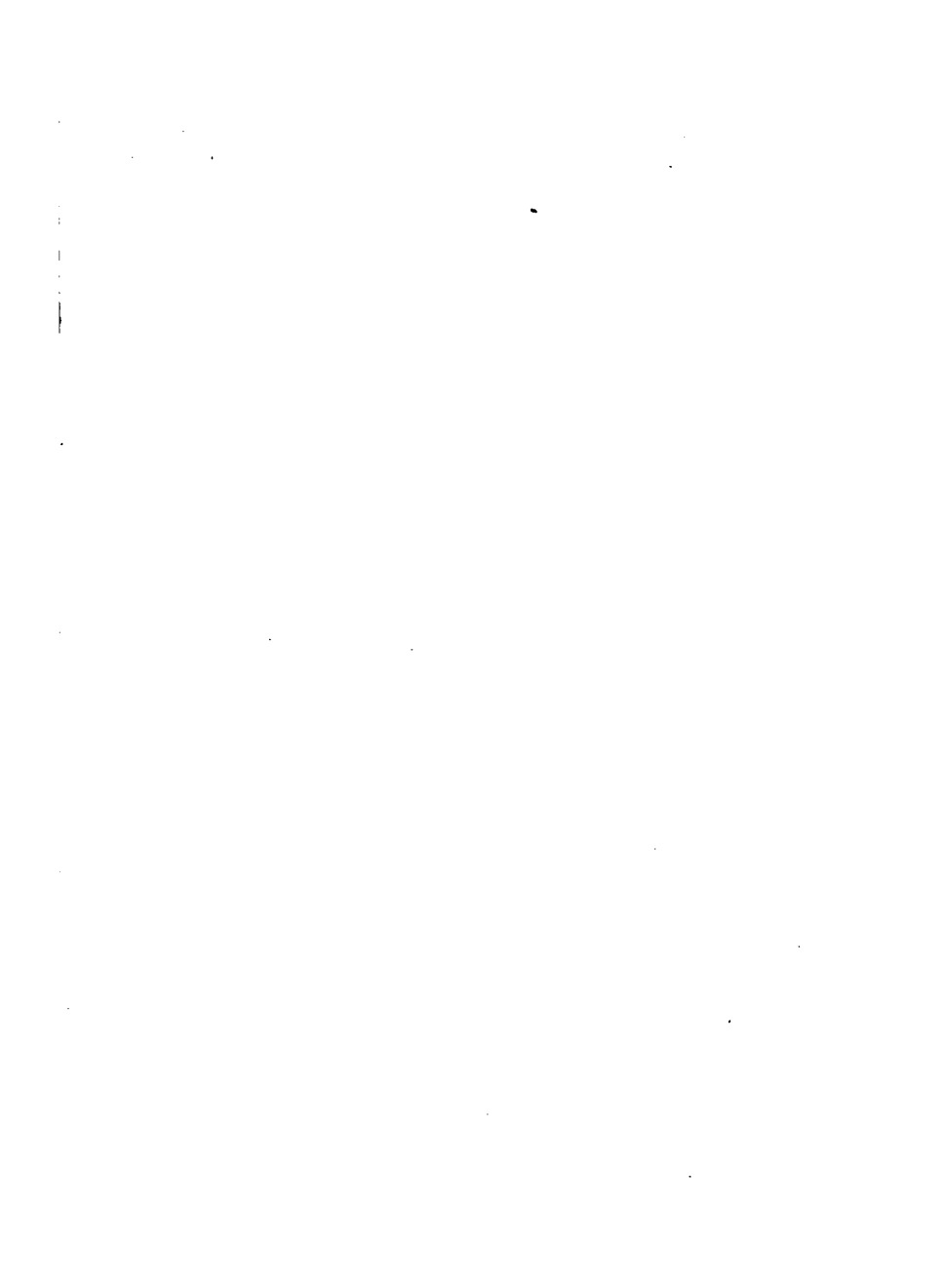
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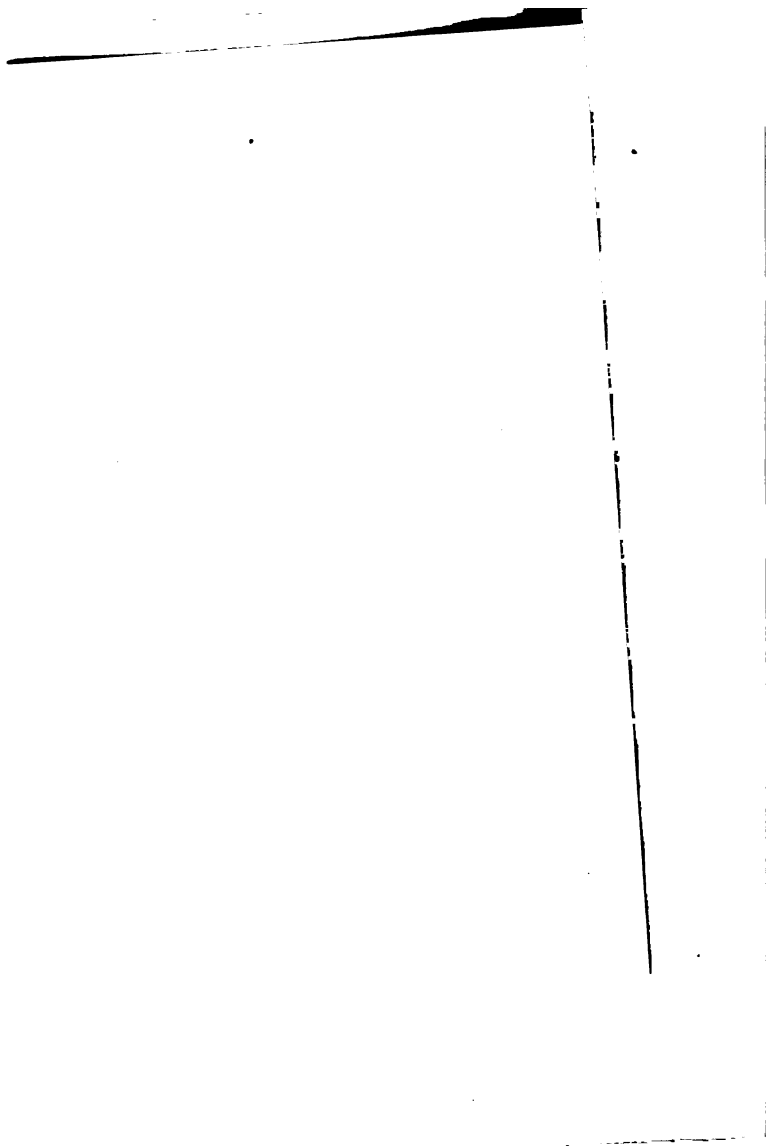
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